Light in August
William Faulkner
Chapter 1

Plot Developments:
Lena Grove is walking along a dirt road towards Jefferson. She is looking for her husband known as Lucas Burch, who abandoned her. She is Pregnant.

Characters
Lena Grove:
Dressed in Blue she draws many similarities to the virgin Mary. She is pregnant and unmarried making her immediately morally unfit by many people in society. Because of this fact, she is an outsider.
Lena seems to be mostly, if not all good. She brings out the best in everyone she interacts with.

Mr. and Mrs. Armstid:
Mr. Armstid picks Lena up on the road. He is very caring and offers her a ride, although he knows her moral wrong doings. Mrs. Amistad scolds Lena for being naive and thinking that she will find Lucas Burch in Jefferson.

Old country road, may have looked like what Lena walked on as she traveled to Jefferson.
Significant Quotes/Themes

• “The brother worked in the mill. All the men in the village worked in the mill or for it. It was cutting pine. It had been there seven years and in seven years more it would destroy all the timber within its reach.” (page 4)

This quote supports the theme of a movement toward decline, with men, in this case the men at the mill, taking all the resources that they can from the land until they have exhausted it. As soon as there done, they will pick up and move on.

• “Apparently Armstid has never once looked full at her. Yet he has already seen that she wears no wedding ring. He does not look at her now. Again the wagon settles into its slow clatter. “How far you come from?” he says.” (page 8 in my book)

Armstid notices Lena is pregnant and unmarried. Immediately she becomes an outsider to him because of her immortality. This begins the theme of isolation, that will be revisited throughout the book by different characters. Lena can never fully be accepted by society because of her unmarried pregnancy and because of that she is an outsider.
Significant Quotes

“It is the man now who does not hear. He is looking ahead, across the valley toward the town on the opposite ridge.”

Foreshadowing of Mrs. Burden’s house being burnt to the ground. Helps to set the chronological sequence of the book.

“Yes I do. I know exactly what Martha is going to say” (page 10)

Mr. Armstid already knows what his wife is going to think a Lena. This shows that Society as a whole will always make Lena an outsider because she of her immoral pregnancy.

Style and tone

• SITTING beside the road, watching the wagon mount the hill toward her, Lena thinks, ‘I have come from Alabama: a fur piece. All the way from Alabama a-walking. A fur piece.’ Thinking although I have not been quite a month on the road I am already in Mississippi, further from home than I have ever been before. I am now further from Doane’s Mill than I have been since I was twelve years old.

The first passage of the book helps to characterize Faulkner’s unique writing style. First off, he puts the character’s thoughts in italics. Faulkner makes use of stream of consciousness writing to help us to better understand what the characters are actually thinking.

This chapter, unlike others in the book involves more straightforward narration and less stream of consciousness writing.
Chapter 2

Plot Development

Byron recalls when Joe Christmas first showed up at the mill and this leads him to remember Joe’s bootlegging activities as well as his relationships with Joe Brown and Joanna Burden. Bunch then tells of how he associates with Hightower and why he occupies his time with work even on a Saturday. Later Byron notices a fire consuming the Burden house and meets Lena who is searching for Lucas Bunch. Instantaneously Byron falls in love with Lena, but he tells her that no such man exists however a man named Joe Brown fits her description.

Character Development

Byron: Seven years working at the mill, Byron spends Saturdays working at the mill alone to avoid trouble. Byron conducts a choir on Saturday nights and associates with Hightower whom everyone else shuns. When Lena arrives in Jefferson, Byron immediately falls for her and is dismayed that she is searching for Brown.

Joe Christmas: Described as a strange silent drifter, Joe has been in Jefferson for three years and lives on Joanna Burden’s property. Joe sells whiskey illegally which allows him to quit his work on the mill and buy a car.

Joe Brown: A drunken gambler who has a white scar on his face, Joe sells whiskey alongside Joe Christmas.

Joanna Burden: An abolitionist woman who has spent her entire life in Jefferson, Joanna is disliked by the locals for her beliefs.

Reverend Hightower: A minister who has spent 25 years in Jefferson, he is spurned by the locals for his relationship with his wife and his sole relationship is with Byron.
Themes

Isolation, work as a method of order, Race

Point of View

This chapter narrative is based upon what Byron Bunch knows.
“There was something definitely rootless about him, as though no town nor city was his, no street, no walls, no square of earth his home.”

Ostracized characters are prevalent throughout the entire novel, and every important character faces some form of isolation during the course of the story.

“Man knows so little about his fellows. In his eyes all men or women act upon what he believes would motivate him if he were mad enough to do what that other man or woman is doing.”

The ambiguity surrounding Faulkner’s characters drives the plot development in *Light in August*. For example, Joe Christmas’s racial secret is a recurrent issue throughout much of the story.
Chapter 3

Plot Development

Reverend Hightower’s wife became lifeless and unhappy as her husband increasingly became consumed with preaching. She began visiting Mississippi to participate in promiscuous activity and eventually committed suicide caused by her depression. His wife’s death resulted in news reporters constantly at the church and members boycotting Hightower’s sermons. He was eventually forced to resign for the sake of the church, but refuse to leave Jefferson even after the harassment he underwent.

Character Development

Reverend Hightower went from an inspired reverend full of passion and fire to an outcast with nothing to claim as his own. After the scandal involving his wife, Hightower lived in isolation on the outskirts of town. He lived life day by day and remained strong but is obviously a broken man where at first he was an aspiring young man with goals and dreams to be followed.
Theme: Burdens of the Past

Reverend Hightower’s past follows him daily. He was forced to live a more isolated lifestyle. The scandal of his wife is known throughout the entire town, even to passing strangers. He is unable to escape his troubled past even in his own house, for when he looks out the window he sees his sign which constantly reminds him how he ended up in his current location in life. His prideful stories of his grandfather are one of the main reasons he brought shame upon himself, but he is unable to move on and stop living in the past of his grandfather and to forget about his failure to be a supportive husband.
Point of View

Narrator revealing the story of Reverend Gail Hightower

Golden Line

“...a fellow is more afraid of the trouble he might have than he ever is of the trouble he’s already got. He’ll cling to trouble he’s used to before he’ll risk a change.” – Byron Bunch page 75

Byron means that a person is scared of change because he does not know what change will bring. A person is more comfortable in their present troubles and burdens simple because they are familiar to him and nothing new. Someone would rather continue to be haunted by their past because there are no surprises than be haunted by the unknown
Chapter 4

Plot:

- Byron seeks advice from Hightower concerning his feelings for Lena.
- Lena is staying at Mrs. Beard’s house
- Joe Christmas has been staying with Miss Burden for 3 years, selling whiskey out of her house.
- Miss Burden was found murdered in her house
- The nephew of Miss Burden placed a $1000 bounty on the killer’s capture
- Joe Brown says that it was Joe Christmas who committed the crime, telling the sheriff that he was part black to convince him
Themes

- Inherent racism of the South- the sheriff was convinced that Joe Christmas was the killer because he was told that Joe Christmas was part black.

- Remnants of the War/ Isolation- Miss Burden is the descendants of carpetbaggers, therefore she is disliked and isolated by the community.
“Perhaps he knew at the time that she would have to know, hear, it sooner or later; that in a way it was her right to know. It just seemed to him that if he could only get her across the square and into a house his responsibility would be discharged.” pg 83

“Christmas dared the law to make money, and Brown dared the law because he never even had sense enough to know he was doing it.” pg 87
Chapter 5

**Plot Development**
- Joe Christmas can’t sleep because of his angry toward Miss Burden
- Takes of the buttons and sleeps in the barn because there is an absence of a women’s presence
- Dumps out his whiskey bottles
- Tries to find his place in Jefferson
- Goes toward Miss Burden’s house knowing the he will do something.

**Character Development**
- Start to see Joe Christmas’s trouble with women
- His inability to find his spot in society
- Began to see his angry toward the world because of his lack of identity.
Themes

Isolation of a character from society

He walks through two parts of Jefferson the white and black areas. In the white part he feels isolated and not part of the society. In the black part he tries to feel a part but is rejected here. Pg. 114-118

The fragmented self

Joe Christmas sees himself in the broken mirror on the wall which represents his life. He is a broken and fragmented individual. Pg. 110
Point of View
v From Joe Christmas’s perspective.
v Flash back the day before Miss Burden’s murder.

Golden lines/Quotes
v Pg. 104 “Something is going to happen to me. I am going to do something”
v Pg. 105 “It’s because she started praying over me”
v Pg. 112 “All I wanted was peace thinking ‘she ought not to started praying over me”
v Pg. 118 “What the hell is the matter with me”
v Pg. 118 “Something is going to happen to me”
Chapter 6

• This chapter provides backstory to the mysterious character Joe Christmas. Over the course of the chapter, we witness the deplorable treatment Christmas was subjected to as a child.

• Christmas is openly referred to by racial slurs by his peers and figures of authority. These insults have no real foundation and contribute to Christmas’ lack of identity. Perhaps the most powerful example of loss of identity is Mr. McEachern’s insistence that his adopted child carry the McEachern name.
Chapter 6

• “Memory believes before knowing remembers. Believes longer than recollects, longer than knowing even wonders...” This quote begins the introduction to Chapter 6, which exemplifies Faulkner’s style. He uses cryptic, unconventional diction to present his commentary on memory the way people deal with the past.

• “He didn’t answer. He believed that anyone should have known that the last thing in the world he would do would be to tell about the toothpaste, the vomit.” This quote exemplifies the innocence and naiveté of the young Joe Christmas in this chapter. He was not the least bit concerned with the dietician’s sexual escapades.
Chapter 6

- The janitor running away with Joe Christmas marks the beginning of Christmas’ habit of “running away.”
Chapter 7

Plot Summary

Joe Christmas arrives at the McEachern place and is assimilated into Mr. McEachern's way of living. McEachern is hypocritical about the way he utilizes religion and punishment, and beats Joe for the smallest reasons. Mrs. McEachern is passive and inferior when it comes to both Joe and Mr. McEachern. Christmas attempts to lose his virginity, but ends up beating the prostitute instead, showing his refusal to be taken in any way by a woman.

Plot/Character Development

-gives insight as to why Joe rejects women and assistance so earnestly. He feels as though they are simply trying to break down a wall he has built specifically to keep them out.

-Joe is comfortable in punishment and physical pain; emotions are things he doesn't want anything to do with.
Themes

Religious hypocrisy, dominance of genders, the cost of sin, different methods of redemption, fear of comfort.

Point of view

Joe as an adolescent and late child. (8-18), the nature of Mr. McEachern and the complex, unemotional, relationship he and Christmas share
""Joe" she said...vanity of a man" page 149. Faulkner is making a statement that women, who are gentle and doing their best to help men, are only hindrances and either punished or simply ignored.

"Perhaps he was ... Alone who was unpredictable"page 159. Another statement of a woman's hindrances. Faulkner implies that men are merely only dependable upon one another merely because they are unchanging.

"it was not hard... Justice of men". Page 168-169. statement about the extreme rigidity of Christmas, women are too comforting and sometimes that may be more damaging than having no comfort at all.
Chapter 8

This chapter focuses on Joe Christmas’s early days of corruption, including sneaking out, seeing prostitutes, smoking, and drinking. Bobbie, a new character introduced, befriends Joe and experiences and often influences many different troubling situations in Joe’s past. Faulkner leads us through Christmas’s stream of consciousness using memories and the importance of finding meaning in the past. The writing style in this chapter is narrative to the characters personality and shows qualities of a harsh past with the straightforward and vivid diction.
Themes/Quotes

- The Burdensome Past
- Importance of Memory
  - “Then it was three or four years ago….to the mind’s insistence that it neither be true nor false.” (p. 186)
- Isolation from Society
  - ”He was not running…the branchshadowed quiet, hardfeeling, hardsmelling, invisible.” (p. 189)
- Question of Identity
  - “You noticed my skin, my hair…his hand not ceasing.” (p. 196-197)
- Women’s Sexuality
  - “She moved. She touched him for the first time.” (p. 188)
  - “It is possible that he did not even know that he was paying with money for pleasure.” (p. 191)
Chapter 9

The focus of chapter 9 changes to the point where he realizes that he is alone.

Point of View: Joe Christmas

Character Development: Joe Christmas struggles to find a place called home where he is accepted, and doesn't know where he belongs in society. Joe falls in love with a prostitute who uses him for his money and rejects his marriage proposal. He is the outcast in Jefferson and is now labeled as a murderer for killing someone. Despite his struggles, he continues to search for a place where he can belong.
SIGNIFICANT QUOTES

- “Yet he went straight to her, ignoring Joe for the moment. “Away, Jezebel!” he said.” –Page 204

- “He appeared to sleep: bluntheaded, indomitable, even in repose, even the blood on his forehead peaceful and quiet.” –Page 205

- “We’ll find out. We’ll see if his blood is black. Lying peaceful and still Joe watched the stranger lean down and lift his head from the floor and strike him again in the face.” –Page 219

- “Why, I committed murder for her. I even stole for her as if he had just heard of it, thought of it, been told that he had done it.” –Page 217
**PLOT DEVELOPMENT**

- Joe Christmas sneaks out to go to a dance with Bobbie, but he doesn’t know that McEachern watches him. The climax begins with McEachern going to the schoolhouse causing violence, leading to Joe accidentally killing him. He later arrives at Max and Mame’s house where Bobbie rejects his marriage proposal. Joe Christmas is then severely beaten from the threats that he’s caused from killing his father. Bobbie tells everyone about Joe’s secret, hiding being black. In order to survive his life of confusion he has to gain strength and stability.

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**EVIDENT CHAPTER THEMES**

- **Hopelessness**: Joe Christmas has to find hope after the rejection of marriage and the killing of his foster father.
- **Identity**: When Bobbie tells everyone that Joe Christmas is black.
- **Death**: McEachern was killed by the hit of a chair from Joe Christmas.
- **Destruction of Family**: Joe is finally separated from Mrs. and Mr. McEachern. He is now held accountable for his actions left abandoned.
- **Self-Destruction**: Ruining his life now being labeled as a thief and a murderer.
**Point of View:**
Joe Christmas

**Plot Development:**
This chapter begins with Joe Christmas slowly coming to consciousness after being beaten at Max and Mame's house. When he is fully awake and able, he walks out the door to begin a fifteen year journey of hitch-hiking, drinking, and sleeping with prostitutes until finally discovering Mrs. Burden's house where he sneaks in to steal food and is soon caught.

**Character Development:**

**Joe:**
- wanderer
- immoral life
- struggles to fit in anywhere

**Mrs. Burden:**
- loner
- doesn't live with anyone
- kind
- hospitable
**Themes and Motifs:**
- The Search for Identity: in all of Joe's travels, he struggles to find where he belongs but always fails. He attempts to assimilate into white society and then to the black community but can never find his place.
- Isolation: Though Joe is always surrounded by people, he is always truly alone. Also, Mrs. Burden has isolated herself, old and single in a house all by herself.
- Naming of Characters: Readers do not see a Christ connection with Joe so far, even though his name seems to point to Jesus Christ, as he lives an ironically immoral lifestyle in this chapter. Mrs. Burden's name is a mystery for now. Could she be a burden to Joe? Does she have her own struggles?
Quotes:

- "The whiskey died away in time ... interchangeable section of cities without remembering names, ..." - This quote describes how Joe lived his life in the fifteen years he travelled. The short length of this description highlights the insignificance and wasted time during this period of Joe's life and Faulkner devalues the fact that Joe travelled everywhere. Many people would find travelling the country even in such an inglorious way as a wonderful adventure but Faulkner makes it seem like it meant nothing as he even describes the roads as a single and never ending entity.

- "He thought that it was loneliness which he was trying to escape ... He was thirtythree years old." - Faulkner reveals Joe's despair in his travels; his endless and pointless search for identity as he walked blindly for fifteen quick years of his life.
Chapter 11

Significant quotes:

- “At least I have made a woman of her at last,” he thought. “Now she hates me. I have taught her that, at least.”

- After a number of nights that left Joe Christmas thinking that he might be “the woman and she...the man” in the relationship, the sexual frustration reached a limit. This quote comes right after Christmas essentially rapes Ms. Burden. The phrase “now she hates me...at least” shows that although Christmas did such a vulgar thing, it seems as though it was almost self-less; he was thinking about Ms. Burden’s best interests. This is one example of why the stream of consciousness writing helps the reader connect with characters in a book where no one seems to have much of a personality.

- Christmas thought, “She is like all the rest of them. Whether they are seventeen or fortyseven, when they finally come to surrender completely, it’s going to be in words.”

- After not seeing or speaking to Ms. Burden for what seems like a long time- the last time they almost interacted, Christmas was hurling plates of food set out for him at a wall- Christmas makes an assumption. Christmas, for some reason automatically assumes Ms. Burden has come to terms with his superiority; he believes she has decided to “surrender completely.” This line calls to attention the minimal dialect from mistreated women in this book (Ms Burden, Lena Grove, Mrs. McEachern). This is another example of how Faulkner intermingles between points of view to give the reader a more full understanding.

- “Damn, lowbuilt black folks: lowbuilt because of the weight of the wrath of God, black because of the sin of human bondage staining their blood and flesh” (Calvin Sr.)

- This condemning quote serves to show just how hypocritical the Calvinistic religion was/is. Although an extremely religiously oriented person, Calvin Sr. has little if any acceptance for blacks. By writing such a manmade interpretation of skin color, based off of hateful biases, Faulkner calls attention to the illegitimacy of many racist statements. Faulkner uses the character of Calvin Burden Sr. to portray an entire group of people in the South right after the Civil War.
Themes:

• Religious Hypocrisy

Ms. Burden gives a fairly in depth description of her grandfather’s life in this chapter and all the while, he always thinks about things through a religious perspective. Ironically, Calvin Sr. seems to be pretty far from holy. He is so mistaken that he believes to truly teach his children about God, he must “beat the loving god into the four” of them.

• Sexual Frustration

Joe Christmas’ sexual frustration still plagues him when he meets Ms. Burden. Actually, it seems to get worse. Sometimes he is thinking that he is weaker than her, other times he thinks she may be a man or even he might be a woman. This confusion and frustration leads him first to rape Ms. Burden, then to near insanity—he throws food at a wall.
**Plot Development:** Chapter 11 is told in the 3rd Person Limited point of view up until Ms. Burden begins to tell about her past. The main advancements within this chapter are:

- Joe Christmas learns that Ms. Burden is an active member of the black/negro education community when he searches her mail.

- After a few days without entering the house, Joe spontaneously enters and begins throwing plates of food at a wall.

- Another period of no communication is broken when Ms. Burden visits his small cabin and begins telling him all about her past.

- Ms. Burden talks of Calvin Burden, her grandfather, who ran away from his minister father at age 12 and went to St. Louis, Missouri.

- Calvin Burden denounces the Catholic Church multiple times.

- Finds a woman, marries, and has 4 children; three girls and one boy, Nathaniel Burden (Ms. Burden’s father)

- Calvin beats the love of God into his children.

- The boy, Nathaniel runs away from the family but when he returns he comes with a family- a woman and a son named Calvin- with plans to marry Juana the woman.

- Lena tells about Colonel Sartoris shooting Calvin Burden Sr. over black’s voting rights.

- Nathaniel remarries to Ms. Burden’s mother.

- Everyone but the three sisters then moves to Jefferson.

**Character Development:**

- This chapter gives a lot of good insight into the past of Ms. Burden. Her family life, father, grandfather, and responsibility to the African Americans in her community are all explained.

- Joe Christmas shows even more sexual frustration in this chapter.
Chapter 12

Brief Summary of the Chapter:

This chapter focuses on the tense relationship between Joe Christmas and Joanna Burden, which ultimately comes to a head at the end of the chapter. A torrid description of their sexual relations opens the passage. But the relationship starts to take a nosedive once Burden tells Christmas she wants a child. Joe says he doesn’t, but in December Burden tells him she is pregnant. The two don’t speak until two months afterwards, when Burden tells Christmas she wants him to take over for her in her work for black colleges. Mocked by Joe Brown about his affair with Burden, Christmas beats him up until he runs off. Christmas talks with Burden, who wants to send him a black college so he can become a lawyer. He is so angry that he hits Burden repeatedly as well. But Burden summons him again, and when he goes to meet her, with a razor, she is praying over him. He will not pray with her, and she pulls out a revolver and fires. Suddenly, Christmas is in the road, and picks up a ride with a young boy and his girlfriend. After riding in the seat behind them, oblivious to their terror, he gets out, and only then realizes he is holding the revolver, with two shots in it, one for him, and one for Burden.
Quotes:

“At first it shocked him: the abject fury of the New England glacier exposed suddenly to the fire of the New England biblical hell.”

“Of course the first fury of the second phase could not last. At first it had been a torrent; now it was a tide, with a flow and ebb. During its flood she could almost fool them both.”

“She stayed him with a single word; for the first time he looked at her face: he looked upon a face cold, remote, and fanatic. “Do you realize”, she said, “that you are wasting your life?” And he sat looking at her like a stone, as if he could not believe his own ears.”

“You’re old. I never noticed that before. An old woman. You’ve got grey in your hair.”

“‘For her and for me’, he said. His arm came back, and threw. He heard the pistol crash once through undergrowth. Then there was no sound again. ‘For her and for me.’”
Character Developments:

Joanna Burden is older than she says she is, but wants what is best for Christmas. But when Christmas beats her, she decides to take matters into her own hands, since she can’t live without him.

Joe Christmas does indeed kill Joanna Burden with the razor, but it turns out it was in self-defense. And he did have feelings for Burden, but did not care for her the way she did for him. And he still cannot overcome his ancestry, as he cannot go to a black college.

Joe Brown is still a snide, young boy who doesn’t know when to keep his mouth shut, which results in Christmas’ beating him.

Themes:

Ambiguity: We learn that Christmas killed Burden in self-defense. He might not be as much of a monster as we originally thought.

Man vs. Society: Christmas is isolated with only Burden and Brown in his world. He also is unaware of the fear he creates when he enters the car with the revolver, because he is so out of touch with himself and the world.

Joe’s relation to nature: He has sex with Burden in bushes throughout the “second phase” of their relationship.

Man vs. Himself: Christmas is always his own worst enemy, and cannot get over himself to take an opportunity like gaining an education.

Joe’s mixed race and its effects on others: Even though Burden thinks Christmas is half-black, she still loves him. But Joe cannot overcome it himself, and lets it get in the way of his relationships with people.

Joe and Women and Food: Burden feeds Christmas, physically and sexually. When confronted with women who give him food, Joe becomes uncomfortable and unable to function normally.
Chapter 13

Summary: (present) Mrs. Burden’s house is burning and the sheriff offers $1000 reward. Lena begins to live in the boarding house and Byron is conflicted because he is beginning to fall for Lena. She starts to live in the cabin till Brown returns. Hightower disapproves of his feelings and the living situation but remains a loyal friend. Christmas is still at large and Brown comes forward to claim the reward against him.

Themes:

- Isolation of the individual
- the struggle to find an identity
- man vs. self, man vs. society
Character Development:

Hightower - In this chapter he is slowly being drawn back into the stream of life and the town of Jefferson, but only against his wishes. He wants to remain a recluse but the situation with Byron, Lena, and Joe’s trial pulls him into the issues. He urges Byron to leave town because he fears his love of Lena will only bring him sorrow, as it did to himself. Because Lena is not a part of the community, Hightower fears that Byron will be shunned as well.

Byron Bunch - Byron is becoming conflicted with his growing affection for Lena and Hightower’s urges for him to leave town and not be sucked into a life assured by societal immunity. Byron is changing as well. The scene where he “doesn’t stumble on the first step” of Hightower’s porch and his “new voice” show that Lena is changing him and although it seems good, Hightower can look in and warn him of this potentially harmful situation.
“And Hightower leans there in the window, in the August heat, oblivious of the odor in which he live—that smell of people who no longer live in life: that odor of overplump desiccation and stale linen as though a precursor of the tomb-listening to the feet which he seems to hear still long after he know that he cannot, thinking, ‘God bless him. God help him’; thinking *to be young. To be young. There is nothing else like it: there is nothing else in the world*” p. 317

Hightower hardly ever leaves home and always views the world from his window. He is an outsider looking in. He is a person who is “dead” and locked behind the windows of a society that shuns his existence, which in retrospect is a frail existence. His conscious thoughts show his concern for Byron, but unconsciously and deep down, he wishes to have a better life and to go back in time to be young again.

“And then you’ll tell that man-Burch, Brown-that she is here.”

The name mix-up of “Burch and Brown” that Hightower stumbles on is Faulkner’s comment on identity of the individual. Joe Brown is slowly losing his identity as is the reader’s hope of Lena finding out easily that he is a con.
Chapter 14

This chapter focuses on Joe Christmas during his escape after his murder of Joanna Burden. Faulkner’s use of poetic description of nature leads the reader to believe Joe is running more from himself than from the law.

As Joe leaves town after his crime, we find a disgruntled boy telling the story of a recent event that has taken place in his church to the local sheriff. Joe, obviously full of rage after his violent act, decides to enter an all negro church outside of town for the sake of venting his anger. Christmas has never accepted religion up to this point and this scene where he lashes out to a congregation proves that. Joe attacks an elderly man, the man’s grandson, and makes a mockery of religion in the church. He then runs from the church a short while before the sheriff arrives. The point of view at this point in the novel is one of a third person omniscient that follows the sheriff as he and his men are on the trail of Joe Christmas. Christmas much more intelligent than the men lead them on a trail of deception and they are unable to find him. The Point of View shifts to first person in the eyes of Joe. Joe’s personality at this point is one of bewilderment. He struggles to keep track of time as he lies sleepless in the woods or in a shack. Joe has multiple encounters with people who all recognize his face and are immediately afraid of him. Joe, however, always asks for the day as if it makes a difference to what he is doing. Joe’s obsession of time perhaps foreshadows a future event. Joe tracks down a young negro boy driving a wagon to a town a few miles away. For the first time in the novel, Joe is finally able to relax. He quickly falls asleep and lets the worries go away for just a little bit.

Joe finally is letting some of his past angst go even though it is vented on innocent people. His hatred of religion is finally let out as he outbursts in a church. As he lives in nature away from society, Joe connects deeply with the nurturing qualities of the outdoors.

Themes: Natural Beauty of the Outdoors, Loss of Identity, Search for belongingness
Chapter 15

Point of view: The chapter is narrated by an outside figure. It focuses on Mr. and Mrs. Hines in Mottstown.

Plot: Mr. and Mrs. Hines are introduced and the town knows little about their past. Neither work but the black women living around the couple bring them food to survive. Uncle Doc (Mr. Hines) used to be a traveling preacher only going to black churches. Prior to that he held an unknown job in Memphis. Christmas is captured in Mottstown and Uncle Doc assaults him. Uncle Doc is returned to his wife where she learns that Christmas has been captured. Mrs. Hines asks her husband what he did with Milly's baby. Later the Hines' return to town and Mrs. Hines tries to find Christmas before he is taken back to Jefferson. The two come face to face right before Christmas is taken away but no words are exchanged. The Hines' then try to hire a car to take them to Jefferson but choose to wait for the train because they cannot afford a car.

Quotes: “‘Bitchery and abomination! Abomination and bitchery!’”

“this white man who very nearly depended on the bounty and charity of negroes for sustenance was going singlehanded into remote negro churches and interrupting the service to enter the pulpit in his harsh, dead voice and at times with violent obscenity, preach to them humility before all skins lighter than theirs, preaching he superiority of the white race, himself his own exhibit A...”

“They hadn't even thought of him taking orders from anybody. It was like she had got something on him and he had to mind her.”
Themes:
Social outcasts
atypical social structure
unknown/muddled past
isolation

Character Development:

Mr. Hines – he once had an unknown job in Memphis. The town speculates that it could have been a railroad or newspaper worker. He suddenly stops going to Memphis for his job and begins to preach white supremacy in all black churches. He did something with Milly's baby but no more than that is known.

Mrs. Hines – even less is known about her by the townspeople. She never goes into town while her husband does. When she goes into town with Mr. Hines people observe that she is very controlling of her husband.
Chapter 16

POV: Byron and Hightower

Byron tells Hightower of Joe Christmas’s capture. Byron also brings the Hineses, who are Christmas’s grandparents. Byron and the Hineses tell Hightower the story of how Joe Christmas came to the orphanage in Memphis. Doc Hines growing more insane as the story progresses. Byron then asks Hightower to cover for Joe Christmas by telling everyone Christmas was with him that night, and Hightower refuses.

Themes:

- Religious fanaticism
- Disapproval of racially mixed children
- Misogyny

Character development:

- The Hineses relationship with Joe Christmas
- Doc Hines’s obsession with God and carrying out His orders
- Joe Christmas’s abandonment at the orphanage and his parentage
- Hightower’s refusal to help the Hineses
- Byron’s desire to help the Hineses
Significant Quotes:

“God give old Doc Hines his chance and so old Doc Hines give God His chance too.” (371)

This ties in to Faulkner’s style because it demonstrates a stream-of-consciousness style that Faulkner used heavily throughout the book. Although Doc Hines is speaking out loud, it seems to be much more internal thought than anything else. This quote shows the theme of religious fanaticism because Doc Hines seems to believe he was carrying out God’s will. This quote also exemplifies Doc Hines’s character as a religious extremist who is slightly unbalanced.

“It has seemed to him always that at that hour man approaches nearest of all to God... the heart quiet now for a little while beneath the cool soft blowing of faith and hope.” (367)

This passage also relies heavily on stream of consciousness, but it also demonstrates Faulkner’s extensive use of literary devices, in this case personification. This passage shows the stark difference between Hightower and Doc Hines; although both very religious, Hightower is much more serene in his faith than Doc Hines is.
Chapter 17

Plot Development

- Lena gave birth to her child
- Byron called for Hightower and the doctor to assist with the birth process
- Byron asked Lena for marriage but got rejected
- Doctor Hines slipped out into the town, Mrs. Hines run after
- Bunch quit his job at the mill
**Character development**

- Byron: for the first time, realize he was nothing to her at that moment, realizing he is digging himself the impossible hole.
- Doctor Hines has not changed through the chapter shows his cunningness when he tricks his wife to leave toward town. He feels the need to go after Christmas to finally end what was began.
- Hightower really opens himself up during this chapter. In the end, he has been restored by Bryan and slowly exposing himself into society again, shown by his willing assistance to help with the birth and his upset nature when Bryon leaves without warning.

**Themes**

- Trust: shown on page 393 where the door was not locked, Lena’s trust in Bryon to get the doctor during Birth. But in the book, quite a few events dealing with broken trust: Mrs. Hines’ watching over her husband and at the end of the chapter when Bryon never said goodbye.
- New life: when the baby was born and when Lena acted also primitive like.
- Past leaking into the present: when Lena explains the confusing Mrs. Hines brought into the past with Joey and Christmas.
- Lost: after Byron realized the impossible and gives on Lena, she realizes.
• “Her face was almost maniacal as he struggled with her and took the child from her before she dropped it…Still she glared at him dumb, beastlike, as though she did not understand English.” (pg 408: this shows the primitive nature of humans. This quote reminded me of Heart of Darkness).

• “The book you used when the nigger baby came” (page 394: shows despite of being in the south, Bryon seems to treat everyone equal, based on their personality at this point in the book rather than the color of their skin)

• “He saw that at the same time it was both peaceful and terrible, as though the peach and terror had both died long ago and come to live again at the same time.” (page 397: this related back to the theme about the past leaking into the present. This seems to stir up most for Mrs. Hines, who is battling the past of letting Joey go and the present of the birth of a new baby.)

• “…feeling the intermittent sun, the heat, smelling the savage and fecund odor of the earth, the woods, the loud silence” (page 406: nature plays a huge role, this time helps Hightower clear his head of what is going on, like a rebirth)

• “It all depends on what you do with it, afterward.” (page 411: actions speak louder than words. This quote is almost a warning because of what happened before, does not want similar fate to happen again.)
Chapter 18

Point of View: Byron Bunch, Joe Brown/Lucas Burch

Plot:

Byron goes to town, fully intent on leaving Jefferson. He meets with the sheriff and tells him about Lena, requesting that Brown go up to the cabin to see Lena. The sheriff agrees. Byron watches Brown as he enters the cabin before leaving. After this, the story goes to Brown. He is astonished to see Lena and after a few hasty lies, he runs for it. Byron sees this and follows Brown. Brown tries to get a negro to get his reward money for him. After this, Byron catches up with Brown. They fight and Brown wins. Brown then gets on a train and leaves Jefferson. Afterwards, Byron learns that Joe Christmas has been murdered.

Themes:

Judgment of society
Circular structure
Race

Character Development:

-Byron gets a second wind of hope
-Byron becomes very defensive of Lena, enough to get into a fight with Brown
-See Brown lying to Lena and later fleeing
-Lena appears to have accepted Brown’s departure
Significant Quotes:

“Byron Bunch, that weeded another man’s laidby crop, without any halvers... Got nothing for it except permission to fetch the other fellow back...” (416-417)

This quote shows Faulkner’s stream-of-consciousness style as well as how he believes the thought process works. The use of metaphor is also a large part of Faulkner’s style. This quote is significant because it shows how Byron believes society would judge him if they knew about how he’s helped with Lena, and it also shows his frustration at the situation.

“But he was not thinking about that at all... he is thinking: ‘I took care of his woman for him and I borned his child for him. And now there is one more thing I can do for him... I can try to do it.’” (426)

‘Not only is the third-person narrator present in this passage, but Faulkner’s stream-of-consciousness style is also apparent. This quote is significant because it shows Byron’s devotion to Lena, as well as a dramatic change in Byron, who moments before was depressed and prepared to leave.

“They see one another at the same moment: the two faces, the mild, nondescript, bloody one and the lean, harried, desperate one contorted now in a soundless shouting above the noise of the train, passing one another as though on opposite orbits and with an effect as of phantoms or apparitions.” (441)

Faulkner’s use of a third-person omniscient narrator is demonstrated in this passage. Also, the imagery depicted in this scene is common with Faulkner, giving a very descriptive idea of what is occurring. This quote is important because it contrasts the two people most closely related with Lena at this point but at the same time creates some ambiguity because Faulkner chooses not to explicitly state which person is which.
Chapter 19

Point of View:

Gavin Stevens tells reveals information on how and why Joe escaped to Hightower’s house. Steven speaks more from Mrs. Hines’ and Joe’s point of view. The escape and death of Joe Christmas is told through the eyes of Percy Grimm.

Themes:

Predetermined fate- Joe attempts to flee from death, but in the end faces death. Hightower even tries to save Joe, because he wants to feel responsible for another death after his wife’s, but ultimately Joe cannot run from his fate.

Sense of identity- At the beginning of the chapter, Stevens discusses Joe identifying and being overpowered by his white blood and black blood. Joe has yet to decide which race to identify with. Steven claims black blood led Joe to escape, grab the pistol and strike Hightower. White blood prevented Joe from firing the pistol and led him to a minister’s house. It seems in the last moments of his life, Joe was controlled by his white side since he allowed himself to be shot, but it is never final to the identity Joe claimed.
**Significant Quotes:**

“...all those successions of thirty years before that which had put that strain either on his white blood or his black blood, whichever you will, and which killed him...his blood would not be quiet.” Page 448-449

Joe died because of his mixed race. He was forced to identify with his black blood or his white blood because society felt the need to blame and label his black side or his white side for his actions. Joe’s identity crises lead to majority of his problems, causing him to run. He not only ran from death, but he ran from the troubles and choices he faced due to his mixed race.

“It’s whether or not we, as soldiers, that have worn the uniform, are going to be the first to state where we stand. To show these people right off just where the government of the country stands on such things.” Page 452

The character Percy Grimm points out the flaw of the government and the law. Grimm, as an extremist soldier, sees things in black and white, as the law. He fails to consider the conditions of situations and what is morally right. Grimm believes citizens require white men in uniforms to show them the way.
Plot Development:

- Gavin Stevens, District Attorney, sends the Hineses away on a train, promising to send Joe tomorrow.
- Percy Grimm wants to form the legion Post into a squad, where he would be in command, in order to show the towns people what the government stands for. He requires all the members to carry pistols and patrol the town.
- When Grimm hears the deputy’s pistol fire twice, he realizes Joe Christmas escaped and immediately begins chasing him. Joe runs to Hightower’s house, where Grimm and three other men follow Joe into the house.
- Joe hits Hightower in the face with his fully loaded pistol while running through his house. Hightower tries telling the men that Joe was at his house the night of the murder, but they hardly pay him any attention. Grimm fires at the overturned table Joe is hiding behind, takes a butcher knife and castrates Joe.

Character Development:

- Gavin Stevens is the District Attorney, a Harvard Graduate, and comes from a family that has lived in Jefferson for a long time.
- Percy Grimm is 25 years old and a captain in the State national guard. He believes whites are above all races, but a white military man is above everyone.
- Hightower, originally refusing to be Joe’s alibi, attempts to save Joe’s life by claiming Joe was at his house the night of the murder.
Chapter 20

POV: Reverend Hightower’s point of view.

Themes: Race, Memories of the Past, Isolation

Quotes:

“That son grew to manhood among phantoms, and side by side with a ghost. The phantoms were his father, his grandfather, and an old Negro woman.”

The phantoms symbolize the rampant racism in the south as well as Hightower’s troubled past.

“Perhaps in the moment when I revealed to her not only the depth of my hunger but the fact that never and never would she have any part in the assuaging of it; perhaps at that moment I became her seducer and her murderer, author and instrument of her shame and death. After all, there must be some things for which God cannot be accused by man and held responsible. There must be.”

Hightower finally comes to the realization that he is the causation for his wife’s scandalous behavior and death.
Character Development:
Chapter twenty focuses on Hightower contemplating his family history in particular his father and grandfather. Hightower’s grandfather was a lawyer who owned slaves; his father was an abolitionist who served on the side of the confederacy but would not fire a shot. Hightower’s recollections of his life show that he felt like an outcast early on in life as his views differed from traditional Southern viewpoints.

Plot Development:
Hightower reflects on his past remembering his abolitionist father and his slave-holding grandfather. His father eventually joins the Confederacy, though not sympathizing with its cause, and Hightower’s grandfather is killed during a raid on Jefferson during the war. As he examines his choices to join the seminary and marry, Hightower finally comes to the realization that he is to blame for his wife’s distress and eventual death. The chapter concludes with a weary Hightower experiencing a vision of his grandfather’s cavalry charging.
Chapter 21

Significant quotes

- *She never saw him at all until he came around to the back door of the truck. She never had to. All she needed to do was wait. And she knew that*

  This is the golden line of this chapter for a number of reasons. For one, this is a quintessential example of how Faulkner uses subtle phrases to create deeper meaning. The only hint of the importance is the fact that these sentences were not put in regular quotations, they are italicized. One of the most important elements of this quote is the implications of All Mother qualities. Lena who has been through so much hardship put on her through other people is quietly accepting and nearly always calm.

Themes:

- Lena as the All Mother

  Lena is one of the most important characters in this novel in that nearly all of her influence comes from her purity. Throughout the entire novel she has never cursed anyone else- she never even blamed Joe Brown for her hardships. Also, Lena can be seen as a character that will always provide the “fruit of life.” She brings unexplainable warmth that Mr. and Mrs. Armstid can’t resist. The reader sees early on that her purity is so real and so visible that Joe Brown must constantly distance himself from it. Fairly late in the 21st Chapter Faulkner reiterates that Lena is always providing by reminding the reader that the baby is still feeding even after 10 miles on the road.
Plot Development:

Chapter 21 gives the reader the final tying up of the novel. The reader finds out that Lena and Byron Bunch are “looking for Joe Brown” though that is a debatable interpretation. It is on this search that the temporary narrator interacts with the two. After an embarrassing rejection, Byron Bunch goes off to some isolated part of the surrounding forest, musters up enough courage to try again and it pays off. Though neither Byron nor Lena say it, Faulkner hints to their unity by describing the three sitting together “with him by her now and the baby.” Faulkner uses two unnamed characters that do the common work of furniture repair and dealing to add meaning. These two characters are the most unbiased source to tell of the happiness that Byron and Lena achieved.

Character Development:

Lena and Byron: This relationship finally becomes whole on the last page of the novel and marks the beginning of a new life for the two in Salisbury, Tennessee.

Narrator and his wife: Faulkner uses these two characters to show the ideal marriage between a man and a wife. Through subtle hints, like the knowledge that the conversation is going on in a bed, helps create a feeling of comfort and belongingness.