

Gone with the Wind Study Guide

Gone with the Wind by Margaret Mitchell

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Introduction

Published In 1936, *Gone with the Wind* became an immediate best-seller, bringing first-time novelist Margaret Mitchell an overwhelming amount of critical and popular attention. Awarded the 1937 Pulitzer Prize, the novel was adapted as a film in 1939-an achievement that won ten Academy Awards. A historical romance set in northern Georgia during the drama of the Civil War and Reconstruction years, *Gone with the Wind* traces the life of Scarlett O'Hara and her relationships with Rhett Butler, and Ashley and Melanie Wilkes. The novel addresses such themes as survival, romantic love, and the societal structuring of gender and class.

Early appraisals of the novel noted its memorable characters and historical accuracy as well as Mitchell's remarkable storytelling ability, though other reviews dismissed the novel as melodramatic and trite. Mitchell drew on her extensive knowledge of Civil War history in order to establish a believable setting for *Gone with the Wind*, but also spent considerable time fact-checking in the Atlanta Public Library. Biographers and critics have discovered striking similarities between real people in Mitchell's life and characters in the novel, though whether Mitchell intentionally modeled her characters after people she knew is unclear. What remains certain, however, is that her powerful, enduring story of love and survival set in the pre- and post-war South has made *Gone with the Wind* one of the most popular novels in American history.

Author Biography

Born in 1900. Margaret Mitchell lived her entire life in Atlanta, Georgia, as had her parents and grandparents. Mitchell grew up immersed in family history, listening to the stories of relatives who had survived the Civil War in northern Georgia. Both of her parents were well-versed in Georgian and southern history, and Mitchell's brother edited the *Atlantic Historical Bulletin*. This strong family interest in history helped Mitchell create a realistic backdrop for her novel *Gone with the Wind*.

Mitchell began writing as a young girl, often spending hours at a time composing stories and plays. She continued writing through her school years, and received encouragement from English teachers in high school and in college. Her English professor at Smith College considered her quite talented, but Mitchell distrusted her opinion.

In 1919, following the death of her mother, Mitchell dropped out of Smith and moved back to Atlanta to live with her father and brother. Three years later, she married Berrien Kinnard Upshaw, nicknamed "Red," but their stormy marriage ended quickly with an annulment. Mitchell's second marriage was to John Marsh, who had been the best man at her first wedding. At about this time she also started working at the *Atlanta Journal* as a feature writer. Linda Ludwig, writing in *American Women Writers*, states that Mitchell soon became known as a "talented and disciplined writer with an imaginative and witty style." After four successful years with the newspaper, Mitchell quit in 1926. She began writing *Gone with the Wind* that same year after an ankle injury forced her to remain in bed. Mitchell entertained herself during her convalescence by reading library books. But one day, Marsh, who had been bringing her the books, announced that she had exhausted the library's supply of interesting books. If she wanted something to read, he told her, she would simply have to write it herself. So Mitchell, accepting the challenge, sat down at her typewriter and commenced writing what would become the most popular novel in American history.

Mitchell wrote the last chapter of *Gone with the Wind* first, and thereafter proceeded somewhat chronologically, working steadily for several years. In 1935, a friend arranged for her to meet Harold Latham of Macmillan Publishing Company. Initially reluctant, Mitchell finally gave Latham her manuscript to read, and warned him of its deficiencies. Latham was captivated by the novel and Macmillan published *Gone with the Wind* in 1936. It was an immediate best-seller, and Mitchell became an overnight celebrity, a role she did not entirely welcome. She was dumbfounded by the book's phenomenal success, maintaining that nothing about it warranted the attention it received. But the public obviously disagreed. *Gone with the Wind* won the 1937 Pulitzer Prize and was adapted as a film in 1939.

Mitchell never wrote another novel, but spent a considerable amount of time personally answering fan mail. When she died in 1949 after being hit by a car, she was mourned by millions of fans for whom *Gone with the Wind* had become an American classic.



Plot Summary

Twilight of the Old South

Scarlett O'Hara is the anti-heroine of *Gone with the Wind*, a character who breaks the conventions of a romance novel from the first line of the book "Scarlett O'Hara was not beautiful, but men seldom realized it." A spoiled, high-tempered, and strong-willed sixteen-year-old Southern belle, Scarlett is the eldest of three O'Hara daughters who live an idyllic life on a North Georgian plantation called Tara. In the opening scenes, the O'Haras prepare to entertain their neighbors with a barbecue, and Scarlett plots to capture the man she loves-Ashley Wilkes-from her friend, Melanie. However, Ashley rejects her, and Scarlett's nemesis, Rhett Butler, overhears her humiliation. Rhett, a wealthy outcast from high society who "looks like one of the Borgias," is both amused by and interested in Scarlett.

The Civil War

News of the war reaches Tara, and Scarlett's life and the lives of everyone around her are immediately and irrevocably altered. Frustrated by circumstances and rejected by Ashley, she marries Melanie's brother, Charles, stealing him away from India Wilkes. Charles goes to war and dies, like most of the young men who attended the O'Hara's party. Inglorious in Scarlett's eyes, Charles dies from measles, not fighting. The widowed Scarlett grows restless at her plantation home, and relocates to Atlanta, moving in with her sister-in-law Melanie and her Aunt Pitty. Melanie feels great love and respect for Scarlett, but Scarlett is jealous of her and hates her. Scarlett scandalizes Atlanta society with her defiant refusal to mourn her husband appropriately, and in a key scene dances at a charity ball despite the breach of etiquette such an action creates. Rhett is the winning bidder in the "auction" for her next dance, and though still in love with Ashley Wilkes, Scarlett soon comes to enjoy Rhett's company.

Rhett's "shady" activities now include blockade-running, and his outspoken views on both the war and Southern society make him even more of an outsider, albeit a gentlemanly one. Rhett and Scarlett argue incessantly, but he is the only person who really understands her. For the next few years, the condition of the Confederacy grows worse. Union troops begin to draw closer to Atlanta as Melanie is about to deliver a child, so Scarlett refuses to flee the city with the majority of its inhabitants. The city is set on fire and in a highly dramatic sequence, Scarlett is forced to deliver Melanie's baby. After Melanie gives birth, she, Scarlett, and the servants flee with the aid of Rhett.

Scarlett returns to Tara, and learns that the region has been nearly destroyed, along with her family. Her sisters have fallen ill, her father has had a mental collapse, and her mother is dead. The Union army has moved through the area, burning and looting the properties of her neighbors Tara has been ransacked but left intact. There is no food to be had, and Scarlett searches the grounds of the plantation and the surrounding



countryside for something to eat. She does manual labor for the first time, and after her struggle, vows that she will "never go hungry again."

Reconstruction

When the war ends, the plantation recovers. Enormous taxes are levied on the property, and Scarlett decides to move to Atlanta to steal her sister's fiancé, Frank Kennedy, whose modest fortune will pay her debts. With the family home and finances secured, Scarlett now becomes an outstanding businesswoman, expanding Frank's sawmill business until it flourishes. On one outing she is harassed by a group of men, which includes some black men. This leads to a Ku Klux Klan response, which Rhett despises. During the attack, Frank is killed, and Scarlett becomes a widow once again.

Next, Scarlett marries Rhett. Their relationship is not a smooth one, but they have a child-Bonnie Blue-whom Rhett adores. Scarlett's ongoing obsession with Ashley begins to frustrate Rhett more and more, climaxing in a dramatic scene in which he forces her to have sex with him. In a deeply ambiguous sequence, this gives Scarlett the only true physical passion that she has ever had, underlining the themes of dependence, enslavement, force, and love that run throughout the novel. Scarlett becomes pregnant again, but loses the baby-another of the bitter disappointments that are growing between Rhett and his wife. Bonnie Blue-beautiful, headstrong, and high-spirited like her mother-is killed when she is thrown from a horse while making a jump that is far too high for her. Rhett is crazed with grief. Stunned, Scarlett retreats into coldness and, having already given birth to a son and a daughter by her two previous marriages, informs Rhett that she wants no more children. She insists that they maintain separate sleeping quarters and their relationship disintegrates.

Revelations

Melanie dies while giving birth, asking Scarlett to look after her bereft husband. Scarlett finally realizes that Ashley has always loved Melanie, and that she has never loved him-he's Just a "child." Rhett is the "man"-the one she's loved all along. The knowledge comes too late Tired at last of her feelings for Ashley, Rhett leaves her, no longer in love. She begs him to stay, asking him what she will do without him, and he replies with the book's most famous line, "My dear, I don't give a damn." Scarlett watches him go, and gradually gathers her strength. Vowing to go back to Tara and rebuild her life, she swears to get him back. As doubts assail her, she utters the novel's ambiguous closing words-"Tomorrow, I'll think of some way to get him back. After all, tomorrow is another day."



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

Scarlett O'Hara, the eldest daughter to Gerald and Ellen O'Hara, sits on the front porch of her plantation, Tara, with the spirited Tarleton twins, Brent and Stuart, who were just kicked out of the fourth university they had attended. Scarlett is not the most beautiful girl of 16, but she has learned how to use her charm to win over most of the men in the county, and it is no different with the twins. As Brent and Stuart begin to turn their talk toward the impending war against the North, Scarlett's quick temper rises a bit. Scarlett flirtatiously reprimands them and turns the conversation toward the picnic at the Wilkes plantation, Twelve Oaks, that will be taking place the next day.

Brent and Stuart think her disinterest in the war is a credit to her femininity, though just a few years ago she was climbing trees and running with most of the boys (much to Mammy and Ellen's chagrin). The boys tell her that there will be an announcement of Ashley Wilkes' engagement to Melanie Hamilton, his cousin. Then they remark on how queer it is that the Wilkes marry their cousins. Yet Scarlett hears none of it, as she is lost in her astonishment about the engagement, for she loves Ashley. The twins soon leave, confused by Scarlett's sudden silence and wondering why she did not ask them to supper. The twin's debate heading over to Able Wynder's home to avoid their mother, much to the chagrin of Jeems, their butler, who thinks that poor white trash is beneath even him, a slave.

Chapter 1 Analysis

In this chapter, we begin a Civil War Saga told through the life of Scarlett O'Hara. This first chapter introduces us to the North Georgia before the war and its naïve and careless view of a way of life, represented through Scarlett's own perception of the world around her.

Born and raised by an Irish-immigrant father and a coastal aristocrat mother, Scarlett puts on the airs of the South's idea of femininity, but underneath there is a hot temper and a wild spirit longing to get out. On the outside, she has prided herself on her ability to act like her mother, but inside she longs to be herself. Scarlett finds men silly, though her goal is to marry - like many women in the South. Scarlett determines to marry the best man she knows, Ashley Wilkes. Though she finds him odd, and does not understand his intellectual nature, she fell in love with his air and confidence at first sight.

Besides the conflict within Scarlett of the person she is versus the person she is expected to be, we also get a glimpse of a way of life about to be turned upside down. This first portion of *Gone with the Wind* is packed with foreshadowing and expectation. The first chapter begins to explain cultural differences and caste systems within the

South at that time. Though the book's portrayal of slaves who like their lot in life and are treated well has come under much criticism, it does show that some prided themselves on the families for which they worked. In the new area of North Georgia, a poor immigrant could become wealthy and earn respect. White rich families were better than poor families, and the slaves for the plantation owners thought themselves much better than even the poor white trash families like the Slatterys - and they were not afraid to express it.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Scarlett, clearly upset by the thought of Ashley's impending engagement, heads to the end of the drive to wait for her father's return from Twelve Oaks. Scarlett hopes he brings better news. Just when she wonders if he will ever return, she sees Gerald riding quickly and recklessly toward home, jumping the fence on the way. Scarlett is reminded of her mother's reproofing words the last time Gerald was jumping fences and injured himself, and teases him about it when he dismounts. Yet, Gerald and Scarlett were always good at keeping one another's secrets, as Gerald often regarded Scarlett like the son he never had.

Though Scarlett tries to maneuver the conversation toward Ashley's engagement, Gerald sees right through it and questions Scarlett's motives for questioning. Gerald questions Scarlett if Ashley has taken advantage of her, but Scarlett assures him that he has done no such thing. Gerald thinks it is a good thing, telling her that Ashley would never make her happy, as Ashley and his family are strange in the way that they like poetry, music, and books way too much for Scarlett to enjoy. Gerald laughs when Scarlett tells him that she would change all that in Ashley and he tells her that like needs to marry like to be happy.

Scarlett, on the other hand, tries to remind him that he married Ellen, who is very different from Gerald. Gerald reminds her that she will change her mind, in time, and that he looks forward to her finding a good husband to pass on Tara. Scarlett retorts that Tara means nothing to her without Ashley. Gerald, upset, tells Scarlett that land is the only thing that matters. The only thing that amounts to anything.

Their conversation ends as they reach the house. Ellen is hurrying to rush over to the Slattery home in order to nurse Emmy Slattery's newborn baby, who is dying. Mammy, the slave that has been with Ellen since Ellen was a child, voices her disapproval of Ellen rushing to help poor white trash like the Slattery family.

Chapter 2 Analysis

Here we continue to see the naïve view of Scarlett, who at 16, has a very small view of the world. Scarlett is enamored by the outside of Ashley. Ashley's grace, Twelve Oaks, and the respect he has earned from others are the quality she sees. A young, blind love, she believes that she will be able to change Ashley once she marries him. Since her parents are so different, she is under the impression that their love overcame their differences, and that belief has shaped her world.

However, as readers, we are able to see the difference, as we will see that Ellen married Gerald after her true love left her, and that Scarlett's youthful view of the world is based on misinterpretation of a situation.



The readers also see the foreshadowing of situations come to light as Gerald lectures Scarlett on the importance of land. Many people in the South did not see that their way of life was going to change so significantly, they took advantage of what they had. Gerald did not, and he knew that one day Scarlett would grow to learn how important the rich land of Tara would mean. That it would be the only thing that ever amounted to anything.

The reader also gets an insight into Ellen's selflessness as she runs to help the poor white trash family who lives on the land adjacent to Tara. A trait Scarlett admires and strives to attain, but never really achieves it. Mammy voices again the contempt that slaves for wealthy families had toward poor white trash.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Ellen leaves to help with Emmy Slattery's baby. Ellen is a 32-year-old mother from the Georgian Coast. Born to aristocrats of French descent, she was in love with Phillipe Robillard. After he was killed in Louisiana, she blamed her family for driving him away, and then agreed to marry the poor Irish immigrant, Gerald O'Hara. Scarlett admires her mother's grace and strength, determined to be like her after she gets married. However, what Scarlett does not see is that her mother was charming and fun loving prior to Phillipe's death, and what Scarlett so admires is only a shell of what Ellen once was.

While Scarlett strives to be more like her mother, it is her father's Irish temperament that flows more through Scarlett's blood. A self-made man, Gerald fled to the States after he killed a man in a feud in Ireland. Though he worked for his brother's business in Savannah, Gerald strived to be a landowner. Gerald won his first slave, Pork, and his plantation in a poker game and he built Tara bit by bit, and earned respect from the aristocrats in the county just the same. Most people knew his blustering temperament was just a front to the soft and giving man that he was underneath. The only families that Gerald did not get along with were the poor white trash Slatterys and the Scottish family next door.

After earning the county's respect, Gerald knew he had to find a wife. Gerald returned to Savannah and, as luck would have it, the beautiful Ellen Robillard agreed to marry him. Gerald had no idea as to her true feelings and loss along with her intense desire to just get out of Savannah, but prided himself on his catch. Ellen quickly became respected in the county, though the spirited people of North Georgia fascinated and scared her a bit. Ellen then gave birth to Scarlett, then Suellen, then Careen and she also gave birth to three boys who each died within their first six month of life. While Suellen and Careen were both good learners of Ellen and Mammy, Scarlett was much more difficult for Ellen and Mammy to tame. However, despite Scarlett's misbehavior at times, she always put on a good face for Ellen.

Chapter 3 Analysis

In Chapter 3, we get a little background on Ellen and Gerald, which explains how such different people came to be married. It also underlines Scarlett's own misperception of her parents' marriage and thus her belief that she and Ashley are meant for one another.

This chapter also explains a bit the class differences in the South at that time. Reading Gerald's story of how he became a self-made man, we see a South that clings to tradition and expectations of types of people. Gerald was able to gain respect, but it took him years and great effort. Gerald was also able to earn that respect because he



was good at what Southerners held dear - drinking, horseback riding, shooting, and a deeply rooted love of the South. Gerald also strove to find a wife that held to the Southern ideals of honor and propriety, solidifying his status in the county.

Again we are reminded of the importance of land, as Gerald knows the only way to begin to gain status in the South is to have land and slaves. Gerald revels in his land, and the reader will often be reminded of its importance.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Dilcey arrives from Twelve Oaks, as she was the reason Gerald was visiting the Wilkes earlier that day. Pork, her husband, pleads with Gerald to purchase his wife, and so Gerald did - along with her daughter, Prissy. Dilcey offers Prissy to Scarlett as her personal maid.

Ellen returns home, exhausted. Though Ellen tells them she is not hungry, Mammy makes Ellen sit down to eat. Gerald starts in on Emmy Slattery's baby and the father, but Ellen interrupts before Gerald reveals the father's name. Ellen quietly eats as Gerald rants about the war.

After Ellen eats, the family sits down for prayers. Scarlett spends much of her prayer time thinking about Ashley and why he would want to marry the mousey Melanie Hamilton. A sudden realization comes over her that Ashley must not know that Scarlett loves him. Scarlett comes up with a plot to tell Ashley that she loves him and revels in the thought that they may even elope. In her glory, Scarlett admires her mother during prayers, knowing that when Ellen prays, God listens.

After prayers, Scarlett overhears Ellen tell Gerald that they must dismiss Jonas Wilkerson, their overseer, immediately. Scarlett realizes that Jonas must be the father of Emmy Slattery's baby, yet it does not matter. As Scarlett goes to sleep, she thinks about how within the next day she could be Mrs. Ashley Wilkes.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Dilcey's purchase shows the reader Gerald's softer side, and serves to show that there were families in the South that cared for their slaves. The readers know from the previous chapter that Mr. Wilkes was willing to give Dilcey to Gerald for free, but Gerald thought it was unfathomable to not pay for Dilcey and her child.

On the other hand, we also see a bit of the pride and dedication some slaves showed toward their families, as Dilcey offers Prissy to Scarlett. It demonstrates that slaves were still property, and they were seen as offering services to a family. The dichotomy of slaves being a servant and family member will be a theme seen throughout the novel.

The reader also gets insight again into Scarlett's worship of her mother. Scarlett equates Ellen with the Virgin Mary, and puts Ellen on a pedestal. It is a character trait of Scarlett's as she also does the same thing with Ashley. Scarlett does not see the whole person, but what she wants to see, and she fits all of their behaviors into her own creation. However, Ellen is the only person that ever ruled over Scarlett. The only person whose opinion ever mattered to Scarlett. Ellen's traits are important, as they will be seen in other characters throughout the novel and are important to Scarlett's growth.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

On the day of the party, Scarlett is in a twist over what to wear. Mammy has already laced Scarlett for an 18-inch waist, but none of the dresses appeal to her. Scarlett sets her mind on a green sprig muslin for which she will need a 17-inch waist. Mammy comes in to help her dress, and demands that Scarlett eat beforehand, as no proper Southern girl eats in public. Scarlett fights Mammy, as she remembers the smells of the barbecue and disappointment of not being able to eat the succulent food. Scarlett finally relents with the compromise that Mammy will let her wear the green dress that is an evening dress not proper for a picnic.

On the way to Twelve Oaks, Scarlett is sad for her mother not being able to join them, but happy to be away from her and Mammy's watchful eye. Ellen had to remain home to go over the books with the now dismissed Jonas Wilkerson. Scarlett feels she will be more free to move ahead with her plan to tell Ashley she loves him.

Gerald and the spirited Mrs. Tarleton talk much of Mrs. Tarleton's horses and the war. Gerald admires Mrs. Tarleton for her strength and ability to raise some of the best horses in the land. However, Scarlett's only thoughts are on Ashley. The group continues at the urging of the Tarleton girls who are just as eager to get to the barbecue.

Chapter 5 Analysis

Chapter 5 serves to give the reader more insight into societal etiquette and propriety in the pre-Civil War South. The reader sees as Scarlett goes through her dresses that even what women wore had a great impact on how they were received. Women in that age were judged by their looks and their actions. Again, we are getting a view of Scarlett's duplicity of being the proper woman outside and feisty young woman inside. In this incidence, she is able to make the compromise by eating and getting to wear the riskier dress.

On the way to the picnic, we also see that married women do not have to live by those same proprietary standards. Mrs. Tarleton drives her own carriage, somewhat for her daughters being so numerous that there is no room for a slave to drive, and somewhat for the fact that she cannot stand anyone else driving her beloved horses but her. Gerald remarks how much he admires Mrs. Tarleton, as she exhibits the qualities Gerald likes in himself.

The responsibilities of married women also come to light here, as Ellen must miss the barbecue to stay home and look over the books with Jonas Wilkerson. Gerald gives little thought to his own wife's disappointment at missing the party. Gerald is proud to have such a responsible woman in his life, and he often thinks of her as a prize rather than a woman. The readers see the difference in contrast to the lively life the single girls lead,

and realize that Scarlett, like so many girls her age, only think of the altar and not what comes after.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

The O'Hara family arrives at the barbecue, and Scarlett is dismayed by Ashley's lack of attention to her. However, she does notice the way the scandalous Rhett Butler looks at her, like he knew something. The only time she saw Ashley was when Melanie was on his arm, and Scarlett did not miss the fact that Melanie looked almost pretty when she smiled at Ashley.

During the barbecue, Scarlett is miserable, even though she is surrounded by all the most eligible men of the county. Not that anyone knew it. Scarlett giggles and smiles her best while the men fawn over her and the other girls glower. Inside, Scarlett just wants to go in the house and rest before the ball that evening. However, before they can be called inside, Gerald begins to rant about the war, riling up all of the men - except Ashley who is sitting with Melanie, offering her his rapt attention. While the men argue, the meek Charles Hamilton, Melanie's brother, tells Scarlett he loves her and wants to marry her. Scarlett hushes him so that she can overhear Ashley and Melanie's conversation and while she mostly dismisses the war conversation, she is rapt when Ashley offers his desire for peaceful resolution. Scarlett is also shocked when Rhett Butler interjects and warns the men of the South's lack of factories, iron, and ammunition in trying to fight a war.

After the women go up to bed, Scarlett sneaks out to the dark library, where Ashley happens to come upon her. Scarlett tells him that she loves him. Ashley pleads with her not to say that, and Scarlett makes her tell him that she cares for him. Ashley admits that he cares for Scarlett, but he is going to marry Melanie. Scarlett, upset, tells Ashley that he is a cad for making her think that he was going to marry her. Ashley apologizes if Scarlett got the wrong idea, but tells her that he will never make her happy, for like needs to marry like. Scarlett slaps him. Ashley, being a gentleman, kisses her hand and exits the room. Scarlett throws a china figurine.

From behind the couch, Rhett sits up laughing. Scarlett, humiliated, lashes out at Rhett for eavesdropping, telling him that he is no gentleman. However, Rhett laughs telling her that she is no lady, not that ladylike behavior holds any appeal for him. Rhett also tells her that Ashley should be grateful for a feisty girl like her, and Scarlett comes to Ashley's defense. Rhett laughs, telling her that she was going to hate him for the rest of her life.

Scarlett leaves in a huff and tries to sneak back upstairs before anyone notices she has been gone. As she reaches the other women, she overhears the other girls gossiping about her and calling her "fast." Honey Wilkes is the harshest in her criticisms of Scarlett, and tells Melanie that Scarlett only has eyes for Ashley. To Scarlett's chagrin, Melanie defends Scarlett, but Honey believes it is just like Melanie to only see the good in people. Scarlett retreats in anger, vowing to take revenge on Honey, Melanie, Ashley, and all the people at Twelve Oaks.



Charles comes to her excited, as the South is officially calling for troops. Charles asks Scarlett again to marry him, and seeing an opportunity for revenge, she agrees. However, she is saddened by her own loss and realization of how much she truly loves Ashley.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Chapter 6 is a turning point in the first portion of the book. It is just the beginning of the change in Scarlett's life and the lifestyle of the South itself. The War is beginning and Scarlett, for the first time, is finding herself unable to get what she wants. It is Scarlett's first time realizing that she is not the center of the universe, and things do not always come to you - no matter how much you really want them.

Scarlett is again reminded that like needs to marry like, and we are introduced to the male version of Scarlett in the novel, Rhett Butler. The readers see in his air and attitude what Scarlett could be if she was allowed to truly be herself and we have some foreshadowing of their relationship.

As we see Scarlett's interactions between the two men who will be most important in determining Scarlett's path in life, we are also reminded of the conflict coming into the South. Rhett has adopted the new culture about to find its way into the South. However, the men of the region, like Ashley, hold dear to their values and culture and resist letting go. Their resentment of Rhett is apparent, and it reflects their resentment of the North.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Within two weeks, Scarlett becomes a wife, and within two months, a widow. In trying to best Ashley and Melanie, she pushes up the wedding date to just a day before the Wilkes.' Though Ellen questions Scarlett's happiness, Gerald is just pleased that his daughter is marrying into one of the South's most prominent and wealthy families. Normally a wedding would not be held until at least a year after the engagement, but the war had been moving everything along more quickly. Scarlett went through the motions at her own wedding in a dreamlike state, and was mortified at Ashley's wedding when Melanie reminded Ashley to give her new sister a kiss.

Within two months, though, Scarlett was widowed after Charles died of measles and pneumonia at camp. Charles never did get to honor his wife and soon to be born son in battle, as he so desired. Scarlett names her son Wade Hampton Hamilton after Charles's commanding officer, as was the fashion at the time.

However, Scarlett cares little for her son and resents her new and restrictive widowed lifestyle. Despite constant reprimands from Mammy and Ellen, Scarlett longs for the freedom she had before marriage. Scarlett's depression grows, and out of fear for her well-being, they send her to visit family members. Scarlett returns still in a state, and so Ellen sends her to stay with Melanie and her Aunt Pittypat in Atlanta.

Chapter 7 Analysis

Scarlett's entire way of life is changing, and her widowhood brings the realization that Scarlett had romanticized marriage itself. It was common for young girls to never think beyond the altar, but now Scarlett was forced into the reality of her dream. This realization will mirror what the South will go through after the war. While the South believed that they would win, and quickly, they romanticized the idea of war and victory. The South would soon face the harsh reality that war would bring.

The readers continue to see Scarlett's inner desires at conflict with her expected behavior. The only two people in Scarlett's life who seem to have a knowledge or understanding of what was really going on in her head are Ellen and Mammy. Ellen's warnings and reproof keep Scarlett from scandalizing her family by wearing the wrong clothes and acting happy. Widows in the South were to wear black and grieve for three years after the death of a husband. Many people thought her depression was over losing a husband, but in reality, it is due to the restrictions now placed on her.

Scarlett's self-centered attitude and youthful ignorance is also shown in her dismissal of her own son. It is apparent that Scarlett cares little for him and is not prepared for motherhood. Again, it shows the stark difference between Scarlett's dream and her reality.

In the end, Scarlett's depression ultimately results in going to the one place she desires least - to Melanie. However, the thought of remaining near Twelve Oaks and her memories is too much for Scarlett, and she begins her road to independence.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

Scarlett arrives to an Atlanta that has been ravaged by rain the evening before. Uncle Peter, Aunt Pittypat's butler, carries Scarlett to the carriage so she can avoid getting muddy. Uncle Peter apologizes for Pittypat not meeting her at the station, but her weak disposition would not allow her to travel through the mud. The butler also tells Scarlett to watch out for her baby's nurse, as Prissy is too young and barely able to carry Wade.

On their way to the Hamilton house, they are greeted by a number of families. Mrs. Merriweather, Mrs. Elsing, and Mrs. Whiting argue over having Scarlett help with their hospital versus Mrs. Mead's. These are the most powerful women in Atlanta society. Scarlett is polite and charming, but she also very excited about the hustle and bustle atmosphere around her. Scarlett notices a very red-haired woman walking down the road and asks Uncle Peter who she is. Uncle Peter tells Scarlett that the woman is Belle Watling, and from his tone and lack of title, Scarlett realizes that Belle is a "bad" woman.

Upon arriving at the house, Scarlett is fawned over by Miss Pittypat and Melanie. Scarlett also finds that the women take over much of the motherly duties with Wade, and she feels relieved. The women implore her to stay permanently, but Scarlett will not commit to a length of stay.

Scarlett enjoys the fast-paced atmosphere, but she is not so thrilled with having to work in the hospital. Besides the smell, sweat, and bugs, she cannot flirt with any of the eligible men like the single girls. As a widow, she must remain demure in respect to her deceased husband. At home, she must endure Melanie talk about Ashley. When it makes her cry, Melanie attributes it to Scarlett missing Charles.

Chapter 8 Analysis

Scarlett is thrust into an environment that seems to fit with her personality, and her only disappointment is that she cannot enjoy it very much. Scarlett loves the fast pace of the city in contrast to her rural county back home, as the town is abuzz with war. The only disappointment that Scarlett has are the proprietary ties that keep her bound to her home, dressed in black, and unable to enjoy herself. Here we continue to see how the South clings to its traditions and etiquette.

The readers also see the stark contrast between Scarlett and Melanie's upbringing. Scarlett finds the Hamilton home quiet, and she now understands why Charles was so meek. Pitty is a spinster, but the other women encourage her delicate nature, while Melanie has a quiet strength.

In this chapter, we are also beginning to see into Melanie's character and begin to be reminded a bit of Ellen. Though Scarlett worships her mother and has a jealous dislike

for Melanie, we see in both of them some similarities. The readers find that Melanie has a habit of thinking only the best in people, including Scarlett.

Margaret Mitchell also begins to show the other side of the war. The blood and injury of the men has only begun. Scarlett and Melanie are exposed to some of the ravages of war through the men's injuries, illnesses, infestations, and more. Even in a time that all hands are needed to treat the men, the South still holds on to the idea of protecting the unmarried girls by not allowing them in the hospital wing to protect their purity.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

Scarlett continues to find herself jealous of the young girls in Atlanta and longing to dance and flirt with the men. One day Aunt Pitty catches her waving out her bedroom window at the cavalcade parading by, and Pitty reminds Scarlett of her place as a widow. Scarlett cries most of the night out of frustration, although Melanie continues to think it is out of missing Charles.

However, Scarlett's chance to come out of her boredom comes from two of the young girls of the county being unable to help at the fundraiser for the hospital. Mrs. Merriweather comes by to ask Aunt Pitty and Melanie to help in one of the booths, and Scarlett tells them they should go, even though it is highly improper for a widow to attend any kind of bazaar or party.

At the bazaar, Scarlett again is jealous of the Atlanta belle's ability to dress in pretty colors and dance with the men. Scarlett is disappointed in the lack of use of her best ability - to attract men and be the center of attention. Also, she begins to realize that she does not care much for the Cause at all and it holds no interest for her. This unpatriotic realization is shocking to her, and she vows to hide it at all costs.

Then Rhett Butler appears in her life again, and she is dismayed to see him at the bazaar, though everyone is talking about his famous blockade running for the Confederacy. However, Rhett sees through Scarlett and calls her out on her lack of patriotism and desire to dance. Scarlett tries to protest, but she eventually tells him the truth and how much she dislikes him. Rhett tells her she should dance, but she reminds him that it would ruin her reputation. Rhett tells her that once she loses her reputation, she will feel more free than ever. Rhett knows this from experience.

Things quiet down, and Mr. Meade asks the women to give to the Cause with whatever jewels they are wearing. Scarlett realizes she has not gold but her wedding ring, and since she hates it, puts it in the basket. Melanie puts hers in, too, thinking that Scarlett's action is courageous.

Then Mr. Meade proposes the scandalous idea that the men should bid to dance with the ladies at the bazaar. Rhett bids 150 dollars in gold to bid with the widowed Scarlett, who is strictly forbidden to dance in her state. However, Scarlett shocks everyone and agrees to dance, stating that it is for the Cause. Rhett tells her that he admires her for the courage to step out and dance, even though it means ruining her reputation.

Chapter 9 Analysis

Though some attitudes in the South are changing, Scarlett still feels strangled by the expectations of society. When she finds her loophole to join in some of the fun, she

shocks everyone by her eagerness to go to the bazaar. However, Rhett ultimately prompts her to make the biggest step against tradition.

This fight between old South and New South continues with Scarlett in the middle. Torn between her reputation based on old Southern standards and the new way of life beginning, Scarlett finds that she likes the new way of life better. However, she is nervous about taking those steps.

The readers find that in the simple act of dancing with Rhett, the start of Scarlett's change from a woman bound by the ways of the old South into the woman she will become are starting.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

The next morning at breakfast, Aunt Pitty is in a state about Scarlett's scandalous behavior and dismisses Rhett as a terrible man. Scarlett shocks Melanie and Aunt Pitty by telling them that she is tired of sitting home, and she will start going out again since her reputation is already ruined. When Aunt Pittypat asks what Scarlett's mother will think, Scarlett pales with fear of her mother's wrath.

Though Melanie and Pitty are both upset with Rhett, all is forgiven when he returns Melanie's wedding ring. With the excitement of Melanie getting her beloved ring back, no one notices that he did not return Scarlett's.

Scarlett receives a letter from her mother, harshly criticizing Scarlett for shaming the family. Ellen tells Scarlett that Gerald is coming on Friday to claim her, and Scarlett worries that she will not be able to use her charms to get out of this one. When Gerald arrives, he reprimands Scarlett harshly, and tells her they will be heading out the next day after Gerald talks to Rhett.

That night, Rhett escorts Gerald back to the Hamilton house. Gerald is drunk and passes out. The next morning Scarlett seizes her opportunity to stay in Atlanta by reminding Gerald of how scandalous his behavior was the night before and how disappointed Ellen would be in him. However, she will keep his secret as long as he returns to Tara and tells Ellen that what she heard was just malicious gossip.

Chapter 10 Analysis

Scarlett begins to exhibit the influences of Rhett and his New South ideas on her life. Scarlett revels in the fun she had at the bazaar, and makes the decision to give up the binding traditions. However, she does not equate them with Rhett's influence. Scarlett does however contemplate if her chance to stay in Atlanta after Gerald's night out with Rhett was at all planned by Rhett himself.

Meanwhile, Melanie continues to see the best in people and is confused a bit by Rhett's behavior. However, in returning the wedding ring to Melanie, we see a side of Rhett that Scarlett refuses to believe. To Scarlett, Rhett is only out for himself, but we begin to see how Rhett treats Melanie with the utmost respect and admiration.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

A week later, Scarlett returns home from the hospital exhausted from her nursing duties and frustrated after being lectured by Mrs. Merriweather for sitting on a soldier's bedside. Scarlett asks Melanie and Aunt Pittypat to excuse her from doing their regular calling, and heads upstairs.

After everyone leaves, she sneaks into Melanie's room to read the most recent letter from Ashley. Though Melanie often shares portions of the letters with Scarlett and Aunt Pitty, the parts that Melanie keeps to herself raises Scarlett's curiosity too much to bear. Therefore, Scarlett had taken to periodically sneaking into Melanie's room to read the letters. For a brief moment, Scarlett feels guilty about what her mother might think, but her curiosity is too strong.

Scarlett reads over the letter from Ashley. It is mostly questions about why the South is fighting, and there is much wondering why the South did not heed people like Rhett Butler when he warned of the South's shortcomings. Ashley fears that the South will lose the war, but tells Melanie that, win or lose, it does not matter for life will change anyway. Scarlett does not bother to finish the letter, as all his philosophical talk bores her. Scarlett concludes that Ashley must not love Melanie, for he does not write love letters like those she has gotten from other beaux.

Chapter 11 Analysis

While we see that Scarlett is beginning to grow into her own womanhood, this chapter serves to exhibit once again her naiveté toward men. Scarlett reads over Ashley's letter, and mistakes his telling Melanie his deeply rooted fears and thoughts of the war for his not loving her. Since Scarlett mistakes words and things for love, seeing only the surface, she cannot see a deeper relationship.

Through Ashley's letter, too, we see the war turning in a very different direction. Ashley's frank letter to his wife shows that while the entire South is reporting to civilians that they are winning the war, the Old South will soon disappear forever. Ashley fears that the war itself will be the South's undoing, whether they win or lose.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

The war continues on, and as the blockades grow, clothes, food, and other items begin to grow more expensive and hard to buy. Despite Rhett's scandalous background, his ability to make it through Yankee blockades and bring in necessities makes him a popular man in Atlanta. Even Mrs. Merriweather relents and welcomes Rhett into her home.

Scarlett enjoys the frequent visits with Rhett, as he brings treats and other pretty things to them. Yet she often feels that Rhett has an underlying disrespect for women, except Melanie. Scarlett sees that Rhett treats Melanie with respect, and Rhett tells her it is because Melanie is the most unselfish and caring women he has ever met, even referring to her as a "great lady."

However, Rhett's popularity will end after a few months when he publicly states his contempt for the Cause and tells the group at the musicale that he runs the blockade for profit, not idealism. Mrs. Merriweather blames Aunt Pittypat, who does not have the courage to argue. Instead, Melanie comes to Rhett's rescue telling Mrs. Merriweather that Ashley feels the same way. Proud and jealous of Melanie for telling off Mrs. Merriweather, Scarlett is also confused that her love, Ashley, would share such scandalous opinions of the war as someone like Rhett Butler.

Chapter 12 Analysis

The war is beginning to take its toll on the South, and Atlanta is just beginning to see what is to come. However, most of the people in the city are choosing to pretend that the lack of supplies is only temporary. The people see Rhett as a hero, and he enjoys taking advantage of the attention for a while. Scarlett often remarks how the people do not see that Rhett is often mocking them in his civilities.

However, Rhett rarely hides how he feels about the war and how silly he finds Southern traditions to Scarlett. Scarlett finds it both contemptuous and amusing. Though she often tries to act properly around him, Scarlett inevitably ends up bearing her true thoughts to Rhett.

Scarlett enjoys Rhett's attentions, and is aghast when he speaks his mind to all of Atlanta society. Scarlett is angry with him, however, she becomes more excited when Melanie is harsh with Mrs. Merriweather, for Scarlett wishes she could have had that sharp a tongue with the bossy woman.

In that same conversation, Scarlett becomes confused as she thinks about Melanie's statement that Ashley thinks the same way as Rhett. It is the first time she questions her

idealistic view of Ashley. In addition, it makes her second guess the meaning in his letter writing to Melanie.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

After Rhett's words at the musicale, Mr. Mead puts a letter in the paper condemning the likes of Rhett Butler. The Hamilton house becomes one of the few places in Atlanta that will still receive Rhett, and it is mostly due to Melanie's resolve. Though Scarlett should feel scandalous about things he brings her, like a new hat, she enjoys the gifts far too much. Scarlett believes that it would be fun to have Rhett fall in love with her, but Rhett is not to be fooled or drawn in by her.

Melanie comes home from the hospital the next day crying. Uncle Peter has reprimanded her harshly, for he found her talking with Belle Watling. Belle had tried to give some money to Mrs. Elsing, but Mrs. Elsing would take none of Belle's kind of money. Belle thought Melanie had a nice face, and offered it to her. Melanie tells Scarlett that she was so shocked, she took the money. As they open up the handkerchief the coins are wrapped in, it is 50 dollars in gold. Scarlett recognizes the monogram on the handkerchief immediately as Rhett's. Appalled that Rhett would associate with a prostitute like Belle, she burns his handkerchief in the fire.

Chapter 13 Analysis

Though Rhett's words are true, they are fought by those that hold dear to the Southern Idealism. However, Melanie's devotion to Ashley's beliefs allows Rhett to enter into her home. In Rhett's visits there, and in his giving of highly inappropriate gifts like a bonnet, we continue to see the Old South making way for the New South.

Despite this movement, there is still the holding on to class systems and tradition. Belle Watling is a woman of ill repute, and no proper woman would want to be seen talking to her. Just a conversation could ruin a reputation forever. Instead of Belle turning against the South for looking down on her, she loves it in spite of itself and tries to give to the Cause. However, the only woman who sees her for her kindness in wanting to give is Melanie. Melanie, who represents all of the romanticism and sweet elegance of the south, is the one to forge a bond with all that the South chooses to ignore.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

It is the summer of 1863, and people are still optimistic about the war. The Confederacy had been fighting well, and they had even held off troops just sixty miles north of Atlanta. The South is looking to a battle at Gettysburg to end the war.

One afternoon after the Confederacy begins marching into Pennsylvania, Scarlett, Melanie, and Aunt Pittypat are in front of the newspaper office. Rhett tells them that the list of casualties is coming in, and so they wait. Much to their happiness, Ashley's name is not on the list, but she is saddened that many of the boys of the county were killed, including all of the Tarleton boys. Mrs. Mead is distraught over the loss of her son, and Melanie goes to comfort her. Melanie sends Rhett to tell Dr. Mead. Rhett confides in Scarlett the irony of he, a Prospector, being the one to tell Dr. Mead his son is dead.

Later at the Mead home, Melanie reveals to Scarlett how lucky she is to have Wade, for all Melanie wants is a son for Ashley. Melanie is worried if Ashley dies, she will have nothing of his. Scarlett feels that if Melanie has Ashley's baby it would be taking something away from Scarlett herself. Scarlett dismisses Melanie to comfort Phil Mead, who is on the porch crying.

Chapter 14 Analysis

For all of the South's firm beliefs that they will win the war, the tide is beginning to truly turn against them. All the things that Ashley expressed in his letters are happening. Few families in the South have not seen a death due to the war. Facing a final blow at Gettysburg, which will be the losing blow to the Confederacy, the South remains ignorantly hopeful.

Scarlett is now faced with a harsh reality that those she cared for are dying. Scarlett worries about Ashley's wellbeing as Rhett tells her that this list is only the first of the casualties. Scarlett also is sad to know she will never see any of those fine boys from the county again, especially Brent and Stuart.

Not wanting to face the actual marriage of Ashley and Melanie, she is upset by Melanie's confession that she is jealous of Scarlett for having a child. It is one of Melanie's deepest desires. Melanie has no idea that Scarlett cares little for her own son. Yet Scarlett feels a jealousy and anger toward the possibility of Melanie having a child of Ashley's.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

Ashley returns home for the Christmas Holiday. The Confederacy has been driven back into Virginia, and things look ominous. However, none of that matters to Scarlett, for Ashley is home. Immediately upon his return, Scarlett notices something different about him. Ashley no longer has a lazy elegance, but a harder edge about him. No matter, she still loves him and cannot believe that she was even interested in other men.

During his entire visit, Scarlett longs to get him alone, but Melanie never leaves his side. Even Ashley's own father does not get a chance to speak to Ashley alone. After his first night home, Scarlett's joy is turned to horror when Ashley and Melanie head into their bedchamber alone.

The day Ashley is leaving, she finally gets her chance to visit with him alone. Ashley asks Scarlett to look after Melanie if he is killed or does not return home. Scarlett is bothered by his request, for she knows Ashley loves her, not Melanie. Scarlett tells Ashley again that she loves him, and pleads with him to kiss her. Scarlett kisses him passionately, but Ashley stiffens and breaks away quickly. Ashley tells her goodbye and leaves for the train station.

Chapter 15 Analysis

As Ashley returns home, Scarlett sees a change in him, but she has little understanding of what the war is doing to a Southern gentleman like Ashley. The readers begin to see in Ashley the brokenness of the South itself.

Scarlett, though, is only focused on one thing, getting Ashley. Scarlett is jealous of Melanie's ability to have Ashley to herself, and feels frustration about not being able to get Ashley alone. Scarlett is still naïve and not understanding Ashley at all.

Scarlett's forward behavior intrigues Ashley, and he has an understanding of Scarlett that even she does not know. However, he is concerned for Melanie, and knows that Scarlett has a passion and strength that Melanie will need if anything should happen to him. Despite his concern, Scarlett chooses to see only what she wants to see. Scarlett is similar to the people of the South in that they only see what they want to see about the war, too. In the passionate kiss, Ashley responds at first with a longing to feel something familiar and passionate, but then remembers himself and his love of Melanie and leaves.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

In 1864, the Confederacy is being pushed further and further back. The South is no longer able to sell the cotton and purchase goods, as the Union has cut off any access to the ports. People in the South are beginning to wonder how they will get food to feed their families.

Scarlett, though, does not care and just revels in her kiss with Ashley. Scarlett is sure that Ashley loves her, and she dreams of him divorcing Melanie and marrying her, no matter how reviled by society they may become. However, her hopes are quickly endangered by the news that Melanie is pregnant. Scarlett wonders if she can live under the same roof as the woman carrying Ashley's baby.

Then the news comes that Ashley has been captured. Melanie is weak and her worry about Ashley is making her more ill. Rhett offers to go to Washington to find out more, and reports back that Ashley is alive and being held prisoner by the Yankees in Illinois. Scarlett is appalled at Ashley's refusal to join the Union army in exchange for his freedom from the terrible conditions reported about the prison camp. Melanie defends Ashley's decision. As Rhett begins to leave, Scarlett asks if Rhett would have accepted the offer, and he admits that he would. Scarlett asks why Ashley did not, and Rhett tells her that Ashley is too much of a gentleman.

Chapter 16 Analysis

In Ashley's refusal to take advantage of the offer for his freedom versus Rhett's admission that he would have taken the offer, we see the differences in the Old South versus the New South. The readers also see how much Ashley is willing to risk to hold on to what he has left of the Old South - his honor.

The readers also see in Scarlett her common sense rearing its head again. Scarlett is a pragmatist, and we see that she cannot understand such esoteric ideals as honor and propriety. However, her pragmatism is contrasted by her romanticism in the belief that Ashley loves her and will divorce his wife for her. A dream now in jeopardy from Melanie's pregnancy, which is also in danger due to Melanie's weak health.



Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

Despite the growing fighting at the Tennessee border in May of 1864, the people of Atlanta remain unworried about the possibility of union troops moving into Atlanta. Still, the fighting is creating a large number of wounded and dead, and Rhett tells Dr. Meade that the Confederacy will not hold the Yankees back, which fuels everyone's dislike of him.

At the hospital soon after, Scarlett feels that she cannot bear to nurse the wounded anymore. The heat, flies, and stink all get to her, so she runs away from the hospital. Scarlett runs into Rhett and asks him to take her far away from the hospital. Scarlett does not care where they go. Rhett begins to bring her back to the Hamilton house, telling her of how bad the war is actually getting when Scarlett sees Big Sam, the foreman at Tara, marching with a group of Negroes. The Negroes tell her that they are going to dig trenches for the men and women to hide from the Yankees, but Scarlett knows differently. Scarlett understands that the trenches are for the soldiers to fight off the Yankees.

After Scarlett and Rhett leave Big Sam, Rhett taunts Scarlett about her wanting to kiss him. Rhett tells her that she needs to be kissed, and kissed well. Despite her protests, he tells her that he will not kiss her until she grows up and gets Ashley out of her head. Scarlett gets angry and demands that Rhett let her out of the carriage right then and there.

Chapter 17 Analysis

The war is moving closer to Atlanta and the people of the Old South are still clinging to a belief that the Confederacy will still pull things off and lick the Yankees. The people refuse to see reason, which also parallels the childlike love that Scarlett holds for Ashley Wilkes.

Scarlett now sits precariously on the verge of womanhood, reveling in her dreams and love of Ashley with the exciting attentions of Rhett. Despite her protests, it is the excitement of being around Rhett Butler that moves something inside of her. However, like a little girl, she fantasizes about the one man she cannot have and does not understand. Scarlett also faces the reality of the war, and finds herself tormented by what she is seeing and feeling about the wounded men. In Scarlett's practical sense, she cannot understand why men would want to do this to themselves in war, and finds herself sickened not only by the actual wounds and stink, but also by the war itself.

Rhett reminds Scarlett that war is for men, and that she is unfortunately the victim of men's need for war to solve problems. It is one of many times that Rhett exhibits his respect for a woman's mind rather than her wiles.



Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

The Union army is now only 20 miles outside of Atlanta and for the first time, the citizens can hear the sounds of battle. All of the men are being called upon to fight, whether they are young or old. People are nervous and panic ridden. As the men of the militia march through the town, Scarlett sees John Wilkes, who has resigned himself to die for the cause. Scarlett panics that Gerald is going off to war, but he cannot walk far enough with his bad knee, so he is remaining at Tara.

Though many believe that Johnston and Hood can hold the line at Peachtree Creek forever, when shells begin falling in the streets for the first time, the people begin leaving town. Aunt Pitty leaves for Macon, but Scarlett must keep her promise to Ashley and stay with Melanie, who is very ill with her pregnancy. Though she despises Melanie, and resents having to care for her, she cannot understand why Melanie loves her so much.

However, Scarlett longs to return to Tara and is resolved to bring Melly with her until Dr. Mead tells them that Melanie cannot be moved. The doctor won't have it. Scarlett must stay in Atlanta until she has her baby in about 5 weeks.

Chapter 18 Analysis

Scarlett, like many of the people of Atlanta, is scared at how close the fighting is getting to the city and she longs for the safety of her home, Tara. It is the first time that she begins to view Tara as a refuge from what ails her. However, she is bound by her love of Ashley to care for Melanie, who is facing a very difficult pregnancy. Though Melanie has always been described as slight and frail, we begin to see how physically fragile she really is.



Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

Scarlett is facing a number of terrifying shellings by the Yankees and the impending birth of Melanie's baby. Often while the shells are bursting outside, the two hold onto one another for comfort. Scarlett is also getting a number of letters from Ellen pleading for Scarlett to return home, but she only returns letters minimizing the war now surrounding her. Even Uncle Henry leaves to join the war effort. Scarlett's desire to return home to Tara is increased when she learns that the Yankees are trying to gain control of the railroad only five miles from the plantation.

Rhett comes to the home one night and teases her about how strange it is that it is she who remains with Melanie in Atlanta. Scarlett tells him how upset she is by the Yankees being so close to Tara and her sister having Typhoid Fever. Scarlett also worries about what will happen if the Yankees invade Atlanta, and Rhett assures her that she will not be raped, as the Yankees are not savages.

Rhett's tone turns a bit more flirtatious, and Scarlett is sure that he is going to tell her he loves her. Scarlett is confused by her trembling at the thought. However, he shocks her more by telling her that he likes her and asks her to be his mistress. Indignant and appalled at both his request and her frank response, she tells him to leave and never come back and storms upstairs.

Chapter 19 Analysis

Scarlett's fear increases, but in this time her maturity grows, too. Put in the strange position of caring for Melanie, they find they are the greatest comfort to one another. There are no men left to actually care for them, which is strangely foreign to sheltered women like Scarlett, and facing the war on her doorstep makes her move closer to maturity.

In this chapter, we also see Scarlett beginning to question her true feelings for Rhett. Though still blinded by her feelings for Ashley, she is beginning to see those feelings for Rhett emerge. It is another step toward her emerging maturity to move away for a moment from her childish love to loving an equal. The readers also see that Rhett's feelings for Scarlett are more than just the liking he claims them to be. The suspicions of his true feelings of love for her in previous chapters are beginning to be founded.



Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

As August draws to a close, a quiet falls over the land that makes people more nervous than the shelling, as they do not know now where the fighting is really going on. Scarlett receives a letter from Gerald telling her that Ellen and both the girls have Typhoid Fever. Scarlett is told that under no circumstances is she to come home and expose herself and Wade to the disease.

On the first of September, Scarlett awakes with a start thinking something is wrong. It is silent outside, and then Scarlett hears what she thinks is rain, but it is cannon fire from the south. Scarlett worries that there are Yankees at Tara, but she must stay with Melanie.

Melanie calls Scarlett to her, and tells her that she is sorry that Scarlett has had to remain in Atlanta with her. Melanie knows Scarlett would have already returned home if it were not for Melanie and she asks Scarlett to take care of her baby if she should die. Scarlett tells Melanie not to be so afraid. However, Melanie tells Scarlett that she is fearless, and that Melanie is not afraid to die, but to leave the baby. Scarlett reluctantly agrees, and Melanie tells her that she has been having contractions since dawn. Scarlett sends Prissy for Mrs. Meade.

Chapter 20 Analysis

Scarlett now puts on a brave face with Melanie despite her own fears and despite her jealousy. Scarlett is faced with conflicting feelings of wanting to return home to Tara and caring for Melanie, but she is too fearful of turning her back on her promise to her beloved Ashley.

Scarlett is also facing another crossroads with the birth of Melanie's baby about to happen today while the fighting is almost in Atlanta itself. The fear of the battle now takes a backseat to the battle in Scarlett's own life - the birth of the baby.



Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

The Yankees had made their way to Jonesboro and the Confederacy was abandoning Atlanta. Scarlett sends Prissy to find one of the women of Atlanta to help her with the baby, but all of the women have either left town or are at the hospital helping with the large number of wounded men.

Scarlett heads down to find Dr. Mead to help with what she knows will be a difficult birth, but he refuses to leave the dying soldiers lining the streets, which are numerous and nauseating to Scarlett. Scarlett returns grateful that Prissy knows about midwifery until she finds out Prissy lied. For the first time in her life, Scarlett strikes a slave.

Despite her worries that Yankees will be invading the city soon, Scarlett searches her memory for what to do during a birth and starts ordering Prissy about. Scarlett resigns herself to the fact that she and Prissy will need to handle the birth on their own, and hopes that it will not worry Melanie.

Chapter 21 Analysis

For all of the fears that have plagued Scarlett, she is not in the midst of chaos for the first time in her life, and she alone must remain in charge. This time in her life will change Scarlett forever. No one else to rely on but herself, Scarlett must summon the strength to put aside her fears of the Yankees and help Melanie through the birth of her first child.

In the midst of the chaos, her frustrations build which she takes out on her slave, Prissy. Margaret Mitchell makes a point of showing that Scarlett has never hit a slave in her life, which has come under much criticism as slaves in the South were often beaten and mistreated.



Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary

Melanie tries to be brave, but her birth is painful and difficult. Scarlett wishes she had paid more attention to what was going on around her when she had Wade. Scarlett tries to be strong, but she longs to run away when word that the Yankees are coming reaches her. Melanie tells her to leave, and Scarlett is shameful of her thoughts.

After Melanie sleeps and Prissy bathes the new baby boy, Scarlett sobs on the front porch. Scarlett is told that the Yankees are on their way, so she sends Prissy to find Rhett to come help them get out of Atlanta. Prissy protests, as her mother would be very angry if she ever stepped foot in a whorehouse, but Scarlett threatens Prissy and sends her off running.

Chapter 22 Analysis

The chaos and adrenaline rush of the day wears off, and Scarlett collapses in sobs on the front porch, releasing all of the feelings she had been setting aside. Upon news that the Yankees are heading into town, Scarlett cannot hold back her need to leave any longer. Despite her previous anger with Rhett, he is the only person she knows will come to her and help her get out of town. For all of Scarlett's strength, she still thinks she needs a man to rescue her.



Chapter 23

Chapter 23 Summary

Scarlett sits in the kitchen and nibbles on a biscuit, feeling her strength return a little bit. Scarlett hears sounds outside, and then sees fire rising to the sky. Scarlett runs upstairs, knowing that the Yankees are here, but she breathes a sigh of relief when Prissy returns and tells her that Rhett is on his way with a horse. Scarlett knows that they will be safe with Rhett to protect them and vows to forgive him for all his evils.

When Rhett arrives, he teases her about being scared and asks where she plans to go. Scarlett tells him that she wants to go home to Tara, but he tells her that it is too dangerous, as the area around Tara is full of Yankee soldiers and the woods full of stragglers and deserters. Yet Scarlett insists. As Rhett carries Melanie to the carriage, her request is to bring Charles' sword and pistol with her.

Rhett gets them past the armory, which is now on fire, and Scarlett watches as the rear guard retreats. Sympathy and awe fills her for the men for which she once held only contempt. Rhett stops at the edge of town and tells her not to take the main road back to Tara, for it is not safe. Scarlett questions him, and he tells her that she will have to go on her own, as he is joining the Confederate army. Rhett kisses Scarlett passionately. Scarlett loses all sense of time and reality until Wade's calling brings her back to the moment. When she comes back to herself she slaps him, and he leaves her.

Scarlett gets back in the wagon, and for the first time in her life, drives it back toward Tara and home wondering why Rhett would be fool enough to join a losing cause.

Chapter 23 Analysis

The idea that Rhett is going to save her calms Scarlett, for she believes that a man saving her is how it is supposed to be. Scarlett finds her strength in Rhett, and almost loses her cool with him there, but his strength revives her.

Upon the road out of town, Scarlett is faced with her sympathy and pride in the Confederate soldiers that she sees along the way. Scarlett does not know where the feelings come from, but for once, her Southern pride gets the best of her.

When Rhett decides to leave her on the road, there are a number of conflicting feelings that rush through Scarlett. Scarlett does not understand her own response to his kiss, and resents him for leaving her on the road. Scarlett's common sense gets the better of her again, as she cannot understand why he would join a losing cause.

However, we see the conflict of the Old South and the New South alive in Rhett. A man who prided himself on his worldly views now faces the loss of the traditions that caused

his ostracism, and the loss of a romantic way of life. Rhett feels a sense of honor and pride in the South that even his own contempt for the war cannot surmount.



Chapter 24

Chapter 24 Summary

Scarlett wakes the next morning sore from a long ride and a night sleeping in the hard wagon. The women continue on their trek to Tara and see all of the old plantation homes either burnt or destroyed by the war. Scarlett longs to return home to her mother's arms, where she is sure Ellen will make everything all right.

Scarlett is pleased to see that Tara is still standing, and arrives at the front door to the open arms of Gerald and Pork. Scarlett tells Pork to take Melly upstairs and orders Prissy to care for Wade and the baby. Scarlett asks about her mother and the girls, and Gerald tells her that her mother died the day before.

Feeling drawn to Ellen's office, Scarlett finds that the house had been raided by Yankees and all but three of the slaves remained, Pork, Dilcey, and Mammy. No matter Scarlett's contempt for the Yankees looting and taking everything they owned, it was a Yankee gentleman that brought a Captain and a doctor to nurse Ellen and the girls. Rather than burn the house as they did the others, they used it for a headquarters.

Scarlett finds herself in a new position of authority, having to care for her father's helplessness and the slave's unwillingness to think for themselves. Scarlett's sisters remain ill upstairs, with Mammy's caring for them, though even she seems lost without Ellen. Mammy tells Scarlett that it was the Slattery's that gave Ellen Typhoid, because it was from nursing them that she caught the fever. Ellen died quickly, only calling the name Philippe before passing away.

In her own bed, Scarlett's thoughts turn toward what to do next. Scarlett is reminded of the strength of her ancestors and dismisses the thought of turning to the O'Haras or Robillards for assistance. Tomorrow she would find a way to keep Tara running. Tara was her home, the red earth sustained her. Scarlett belonged to it and it to her. Scarlett's family had suffered misfortune before and come out of it better than ever - she vowed to do it again.

Chapter 24 Analysis

This chapter is another turning point in Scarlett's life. In her mind, Ellen will save her. Scarlett knows if she can just get home, Ellen will make everything okay. However, upon arriving there, Ellen is dead, and everyone looks to Scarlett to make the decisions. While she desires to turn the reigns over to someone else, Scarlett finds herself thrust into the adult parenting role. For the first time, she is faced with all of the responsibility for everyone's well being. Like it or not, she is in charge.

Scarlett does not remember Gerald's earlier words about the fact that land is the only thing worth anything, but Scarlett is beginning to realize it. Scarlett finds that the red

earth of Tara is her life force. While it is torn apart and destroyed, Scarlett vows to overcome the adversity as her ancestors did before her. Scarlett gets her strength from that land, which comes to represent her own struggle to survive.



Chapter 25

Chapter 25 Summary

Scarlett wakes the next morning and heads down to breakfast where she finds a deluded Gerald still waiting for Ellen to come down the stairs. Scarlett wonders how she will handle it all on her own if he cannot take charge and pushes the thought away until tomorrow. Scarlett finds herself having to order the slaves about, though they protest that they are house slaves, not field hands. Ignoring their protests, she heads out to Twelve Oaks to find food, but finds the great plantation in burnt remains. It is in looking around at the disaster that Scarlett finally breaks down, wondering how the beautiful belle of the county ended up here. Remembering a way of life that was gone forever, she vows that she and her family will live through it and never be hungry again.

While the war rages on outside of the grounds of Tara, all Scarlett deals with are the hungry mouths to feed at the plantation. Scarlett notices that something is wrong with Wade, who spends all his time with Melanie, but she comes to think of him only as another mouth to feed. Scarlett finds herself reigning supreme at Tara now. All of Ellen's teachings about being gentle to the slaves and loving her sisters were forgotten in her fear of not knowing what she was doing and the dead weight of two sisters who were too weak to help out. All that was left in Scarlett was her tie to the land, and she begins to understand now why wars were fought. Land was all there was worth fighting for. Scarlett was not going to let anyone take it away from her.

Chapter 25 Analysis

Scarlett has made the transition from young lady and daughter to head of household. Scarlett does not take time to think about how miserable life is around her; she just puts the feelings away to deal with later - a common theme throughout the story. Scarlett is faced with the need to survive, and it deepens her ties to the red earth of Tara.

Mitchell uses these chapters to drive forth Scarlett's ties to the land, for it will come to play a bigger role in defining Scarlett's character. For in this chapter, we see Scarlett building up a deep-rooted need to just survive that will mark her future decision-making.

The readers also see in this chapter that the South is changing forever, for Scarlett is moving into the ways of the New South. While her sisters and slaves are desperately clinging to the old ways, Scarlett has been forced to move on. Scarlett gives a fleeting thought to the past, but uses her strength to move into the future. In the same tone, Gerald represents the Old South and the inability to let go. Gerald's dementia keeps him rooted in the old ways and traditions of which the South will soon have to let go.



Chapter 26

Chapter 26 Summary

Two weeks after returning to Tara, Scarlett is saddled with an infected toe. Scarlett is frustrated with how it is slowing her down, and wonders how she will make ends meet. A Yankee soldier rides up and Scarlett knows he is coming to loot the house. With first an instinct to hide, she remembers the food and things she needs to feed her family. So instead, she grabs the pistol. The soldier approaches her and Scarlett shoots him. Melanie comes running down the hall with Charles' sword, her eyes glowing with grim pride at Scarlett, and she finds an admiration for Melanie sharing her feelings. Before Scarlett drags him out of the house, they discover money in his wallet and a realization that they now have his horse.

With a real horse, Scarlett finds herself able to see what happened to her neighbors. Scarlett visits with the Fontaines, where Grandma Fontaine forces Scarlett to tell her what is wrong at Tara, and how it came to be. While Scarlett expects Grandma Fontaine to offer some sage assistance, she is disappointed when Grandma Fontaine only warns Scarlett to always keep something to fear, for without that she will become cold and hard-hearted. However, the Fontaines gives Scarlett food and supplies to help them at home, for which she is grateful.

Inspired by Mrs. Fontaine's words about work, she returns home to take up picking the cotton in the fields. Scarlett is humiliated, but only Dilcey will help her. The other slaves refuse to assist, claiming that they are house slaves and the field labor is beneath them. Even her sisters working in the fields had not worked very well. Suellen complained too much and Careen was still too ill. Careen's condition worried Scarlett, as she was still pale and faint at times.

In the fields, Scarlett's thoughts turn to next spring. Scarlett had made the decision to plant and plant so that she could earn some money to restore Tara acre by acre. Scarlett found a hope inside of her that the worst was over.

Chapter 26 Analysis

Though Scarlett believes herself miserable, she is allowed the freedom to actually be herself now. Scarlett finds strength and respect for Melanie in realizing that, as different as they may be, they share a strength and determination to survive. Melanie's inner strength is something respectable and real to Scarlett, as she finds it more practical in difficult times.

Scarlett, still seeing the world through inexperience and raw strength, finds Grandma Fontaine's words uncomfortable, but they foreshadow a personality change in Scarlett after the war is over. If Scarlett does not find something to fear, something humbling, then she will grow hard. However, Scarlett pushes fears aside just to survive.



Scarlett and the rest of the people at Tara continue to struggle with the class lines and rules of decorum that had defined their entire lives against what is necessary to survival. Suellen and the house slaves hold dear to the old ways in which the work in the fields and with the animals is below them. Even Careen, who is willing to work, is too weak to help Scarlett, though Scarlett respects her sister more for the offer.



Chapter 27

Chapter 27 Summary

Scarlett is alarmed as she learns that the Yankee army is heading back toward Tara. Scarlett sends the family down to the swamp with the horse, pigs, and some food to hide. Melanie, the baby, and Wade remain with her. Scarlett hides the Yankee soldier's wallet in the one place she does not think the Yankees will look, the baby's diaper.

The Yankee's arrive and steal and destroy everything around her. A soldier tries to steal Wade's grandfather's sword, but his commanding officer reprimands him and lets Scarlett keep it. Angry, the private sets fire to the kitchen as the Yankees leave the house. Scarlett tries to stop the fire, and with Melanie's help, they succeed. Scarlett reluctantly admires Melanie's strength and courage once again. Melanie, too, raises Scarlett's spirits by admiring how smart it was to hide the wallet in the baby's diaper, believing only Scarlett would think of it.

Chapter 27 Analysis

Scarlett, so hopeful in the last chapter, finds her hopes dashed by the work of the Yankee soldiers. Scarlett's hard work in the fields was destroyed by the soldiers burning the stored cotton and stealing what food the family could not take with them to the swamp.

However, for all that she has lost, she refuses to lose the house with it, and fights off the fire almost to her own death. Melanie's cool thinking and heroism in the face of the fire again forces Scarlett to admire the woman she is so determined not to like at all. Bonds are forming between the two women that even Scarlett will not be able to sever.

The readers also see Scarlett's quick thinking in moments of panic, and how she is at her best in crisis. Even in those moments, Scarlett's concern for her son shocks even her as she fights for his sword. Never explained outright, it is a rare glimmer of a motherly care for her son.



Chapter 28

Chapter 28 Summary

After the Yankees left, most of the county was again in ruins. The families barely had any food, though they shared what they could with one another. Pork went out often to see what he could forage and often returned with stolen food. Scarlett, worried about the future, dreams every night of a thick fog through which she is running, seeking out something she cannot find. Scarlett has even taken to sleeping with Melanie at night to curb the dreams.

Around Christmas, Tara is visited by Frank Kennedy and some other Confederate soldiers who are making the rounds trying to find food for the army. The discussion turns to Atlanta, and Frank tells them that the Yankees have burned most of it to the ground, though Aunt Pitty's house still stands relatively unharmed. Melanie thoughtlessly expresses that they should return to Atlanta, as Aunt Pitty will not be able to make it there without them, but she is served a harsh reprimand by Scarlett who will not leave Tara.

As the group heads toward the out-of-tune piano to sing carols, Frank confides in Scarlett that the end of the war is near, as the Yankees have taken Savannah. Frank also asks Scarlett for Suellen's hand in marriage. Scarlett, alarmed to hear that Savannah has been taken and the convicts from the prison released is equally bothered that Frank had not asked for Suellen's hand before this. Scarlett agrees to it, and wishes that he could marry her now and take her away, for then there would be one less mouth to feed.

Chapter 28 Analysis

If there was any question of Scarlett now being the head of household at Tara, her rank is solidified by both Frank being so forthcoming about the war to her alone and his asking her for Suellen's hand in marriage. Though etiquette usually required him to ask the father, he would have to ask the head of house if the father was unable to permit the marriage - which is Scarlett.

It angers Scarlett when Melanie carelessly voices the idea of returning to Atlanta. While it is just a thought for Melanie, whose heart remains in the city where she was raised, Scarlett cannot think of leaving the red earth that sustains her, and she shows feelings of betrayal. It reinforces the sisterly relationship developing between Melanie and Scarlett that Melanie understands Scarlett's ties to Tara and what Scarlett has given up to keep them all alive, though Scarlett herself does not realize it.



Chapter 29

Chapter 29 Summary

It is April and the war is over, as General Johnston surrendered in North Carolina. The men of the county that had survived the war are now returning to the county and many stop by Tara to be welcomed home. Scarlett revels in the war ending and begins to plant more cotton, planning for the next year's sales. However, after several weeks, they are still saddened by the fact that there is still no word from Ashley.

Scarlett vows that Tara will never be destroyed or given up on like some of her neighbors' plantations. Scarlett, like some of the other families, turns to hard work to survive. However, she is shocked one day when Cathleen Calvert rides up to tell her and Melanie that she is marrying Mr. Hilton, the Yankee overseer. Melanie is humiliated for Cathleen and tells Scarlett to invite her to live at Tara and be a spinster, which is more respectable than marrying a Yankee. Scarlett, seeing Cathleen as another mouth to feed refuses, telling Melanie that Cathleen is too proud to take their charity, though she resents the fact that Melanie does not realize that she, too, is living off Scarlett's charity.

Chapter 29 Analysis

Scarlett's hardening heart and survival instinct is becoming sharper every day, as is her own business sense. Scarlett sees the end of the war as an opportunity rather than an end to a way of life and she refuses to give up as many of the neighbors have, eyeing them with pity. Scarlett's dislike of charity and her need to survive also reinforces her common sense, which she believes is what Cathleen Calvert is using by marrying a Yankee. Scarlett never had a real sense of pride in the South, just a hatred of Yankees for destroying her land. Scarlett sees that Cathleen is taking advantage of the right opportunity. On the other hand, Melanie holds dearly to the old ways of the South, and has a pride in the South itself. Melanie is able to see Cathleen's own humiliation, while Scarlett only sees a mouth to feed.



Chapter 30

Chapter 30 Summary

The summer after peace was announced, the soldiers headed home start to show up at Tara. Lice ridden, hungry, and dirty, Mammy and the women of Tara make sure that the men receive treatment, food, and a place to eat. Scarlett resents them at first, as there is already little to eat for all of them, but Melanie tells her to remember Ashley heading home and how some family may be feeding him along the way and she finds herself putting more food on the table when soldiers were present.

Uncle Peter shows up demanding that Scarlett and Melanie return to Atlanta to care for Miss Pittypat. The women laugh at him when he tells them that it just doesn't look proper for Miss Pitty to live alone. However, Melanie faints when Uncle Peter hands Melanie a letter from Ashley. Scarlett opens the letter, even though it is addressed to Melanie, and reads the contents. It is endearments to Melanie, telling her that he is coming home, which Scarlett takes to her own heart.

While they wait impatiently for Ashley to return home, a soldier comes to stay with them called Will Benteen. Will was seriously ill when he arrived at Tara, but the family nursed him to health. Though he is a cracker, his easy ways and hard work earn the respect of everyone at Tara. Will has a calming effect even on Scarlett, and she sometimes wonders what they did before Will came, as he seems to be the only one who understands her position.

That September, Scarlett and Will make plans to rent out the horse, and he also helps in picking the cotton. The two see a man walking up the road to the house. At first, Scarlett complains to Will that there is another mouth to feed until she sees Melanie running toward him. Scarlett realizes that it is Ashley and starts after Melanie, but Will holds her back reminding her that Ashley is Melanie's husband.

Chapter 30 Analysis

In this chapter, we see the return of the soldiers to their homes. With dysentery and infestations so prominent, many of the women wonder how any of them could have fought a war under those conditions. Many of them come home with physical losses, but they have yet to face the worst of it, their loss of a way of life.

The readers also see from the death of the young cadet on the doorstep of Tara that the war took its toll on even the youngest of children who fought a war for a way of life they had not even begun to understand.

Melanie is growing into a wise woman and wife, gathering the respect that Ellen had once garnered for her selflessness and strength. While Scarlett's strength is more cold,

calculated, and harsh, Melanie can rule with a soft word. Readers will continue to see that grow and the power shift throughout the novel.

Will Benteen arrives at the home to also show a shift in thinking and class systems. Before the war, no one in that house would have spoken to a cracker. Yet now, hard work and a shoulder to lean on is valued more than a birthright. Scarlett, for the first time, values someone for more than a plantation, looks, or family history.



Chapter 31

Chapter 31 Summary

It is January 1866. Scarlett is cold and wearing slippers repaired with carpet so that her bare feet will not touch the cold floor. Will asks Scarlett how much money she has and then tells her that it is not enough to pay the taxes on Tara. The Carpetbaggers and Scalawags in town have raised the taxes on Tara sky high, as there is some Yankee interested in buying it cheap. The two think it may be Mr. Hilton. Scarlett and Will seek out Ashley to see if he has some advice.

Scarlett finds Ashley out back splitting wood. It hurts Scarlett to see her debonair Ashley reduced to wearing tatters and working his fingers to the bone. Ashley tells her that he cannot help her and speaks of gods and a beauty of living that has disappeared. Ashley's words only confuse Scarlett, for they are theories and metaphors that she cannot grasp. Ashley tells her that she cannot understand why he feels he is being punished for being afraid, because she is fearless - she would never just want to escape. However, that is exactly what Scarlett tells him she would love to do.

Scarlett talks of them escaping together and of how he loves her more than he loves Melanie. Scarlett forces him to tell her that he loves her, which he does, and then he kisses her. However, Ashley remembers himself, and shakes Scarlett to her senses. Scarlett cannot understand how the way he loves her is different from Melanie. Ashley tells Scarlett that he will never leave the best wife any man ever had. Ashley loves Scarlett's fearlessness, strength, and ruthlessness. Ashley feels he has overstepped his boundaries and decides to take Melanie and the baby and leave Tara.

Scarlett is appalled that he would even think of leaving. Scarlett tells him that if he leaves she will have nothing. However, he places the red dirt in her hand and reminds her that she will have Tara. As she looks around at the land she fought so hard to keep, she realizes that he is right. Putting her feelings away, she tells him to stay. Scarlett won't have him starve just because she's thrown herself at him. It will never happen again. Scarlett walks away, squaring her shoulders as she goes, a gesture that goes more to Ashley's heart than anything she could have said.

Chapter 31 Analysis

Scarlett takes the next important step for her in her life, as she realizes in this passionate moment that Ashley will never be able to move beyond his gentlemanly ways and Old South thinking. Ashley's love of an old way of life and honor is greater than his love for her, and she finally concludes that he will never leave Melanie for her.

Scarlett turns her determination to finding a way to save Tara. Though she dreams of running away with Ashley, she could never give up the land she had fought so hard to save. Scarlett is reminded again that her love of Tara sustains her more than any other

love in her life. Like those in hard times, there is a wish for it all to go away, but we glimpse into Scarlett's developing character of strength and determination. Scarlett is now the adult, with adult thoughts and feelings. Scarlett is no longer the belle of the ball, but the leader of a household. Scarlett can never turn back, and she vows to move forward into the New South developing around her.



Chapter 32

Chapter 32 Summary

Scarlett returns to the house with the red clay still in her hand. Jonas Wilkerson and his new bride, Emmie Slattery, ride up dressed in fine clothes and in a shiny new carriage. Jonas tells Scarlett that he would like to buy Tara for his new bride. Angry in even thinking that a Scalawag like Jonas and white trash like Emmie would be living in her beloved Tara causes Scarlett to lash out. Scarlett yells that the woman who killed Ellen will never live at Tara, and she will burn down the house before she lets scum like them live there. Jonas tells her that he will make sure she will never be able to pay the taxes on Tara and he will just take the house from her rather than make her an honest offer. Scarlett spits at the carriage as the Wilkerson's drive away.

Scarlett sets her mind on what she must do. Ashley had told her that the only person in Georgia with any money was Rhett Butler. Even though she never would have thought of becoming his mistress in the past, she resolves that it is the only way to save Tara. Scarlett decides that she will have Mammy make a dress from Ellen's beautiful velvet curtains and head to Atlanta to get Rhett to marry her, as she cannot go see him looking ragged and tired. After all, she is already too skinny and has a cat-like harshness to her features now.

The women work hard to get a beautiful dress ready for Scarlett. The men stare in wonder at the excitement. Will expresses his dislike about Scarlett going to Atlanta with only Mammy by her side. Yet, Ashley knows that Mammy will not let Scarlett out of her sight. Ashley suspects what Scarlett is about to do, and he admires her for her gallantry. Ashley believes she is the most gallant soul he has ever known. Yet Ashley knows, after seeing it so often in the war, that gallantry does not always mean victory.

Chapter 32 Analysis

Scarlett begins to face head on the challenge of Reconstruction of the South and how old wounds come to fester. While Emmie looks to get beyond her oppressed past by owning the place that oppressed her, Jonas looks to get revenge on the O'Hara family. It was common in the South at that time that many poor families turned Republican in a South that was very much democratic. By becoming Republicans, they were allowed to vote, while Democrats were not, and so they reshaped the way things were run in the South much to their advantage.

Ashley continues to represent the Old South, and like most of the Old Guard, feels helpless in the situation. Ashley admires and loves Scarlett's strength equating her with many of the gallant heroes on the battlefield. Readers see here that his love for Scarlett is not like the one holds for Melanie, it comes from Scarlett being more of the man he can never be. It is a love of admiration and desire. Ashley worries, though, about

Scarlett's desire to win at any cost, as he watches men with the same drive fall on the South's battlefields.



Chapter 33

Chapter 33 Summary

Scarlett and Mammy arrive in Atlanta and are appalled at just how badly the city has been destroyed by the war. Though it is shocking for them to see the once familiar buildings and landmarks destroyed, it is just as awful for them to experience the Negroes of the city showing blatant disrespect to white people, especially white women.

The women arrive at Miss Pittypat's happy to be safe, and listen as Pitty tells them about all of the hardships some of the most prominent families in Atlanta are facing. Scarlett tries hard to get the conversation to turn to Rhett, and is shocked to find out that Rhett is in jail for killing a black man who had insulted a white woman. Pitty tells her that the Yankees are very upset about the development of the Ku Klux Klan in Atlanta.

Scarlett tells the women she is not feeling well, and asks Pitty to excuse her from calling the next day. Scarlett is determined for Mammy to go calling with Aunt Pitty and leave Scarlett to sneak out and visit Rhett at the jail by herself.

Chapter 33 Analysis

Scarlett had only seen some of the effects of Reconstruction at Tara, but she had not realized how devastated the entire South was until she arrived in Atlanta. Prominent families had taken to using their homes as boarding houses and selling food to Yankees just to keep money coming in. The wealthiest people were now living in poverty. However, Aunt Pitty is still living in her own little world determined to hold on to her Old South beliefs and some of Uncle Henry's charity.

Scarlett's thoughts, though, are only on how to get Rhett to marry her. Scarlett does not listen as Pitty tells her about the Ku Klux Klan. Mitchell's take on the Klan is idealistic, as many people's views in the South were. Mitchell describes the actions of the Klan very plainly, but by having Aunt Pitty describe it, she gives the actions a legitimacy that has angered many critics. However, the voice of the book is through a Southern point of view, which saw the Klansmen as heroes trying to protect a beloved way of life. It is the last remnant of the Old South rising to fight a New South from entering into their life.



Chapter 34

Chapter 34 Summary

Scarlett heads out to meet with Rhett at the jail. Scarlett is cold, as there is a chilled wind blowing through the air. When she arrives at the Yankee headquarters, the soldiers there take her inside and dote on her to make sure that she remains safe and warm. Their kind treatment makes her think that Yankees are not so bad. Scarlett tells them that she is Rhett's sister and would like to see him. Laughing about how many "sisters" that Rhett has, they bring him out to meet her.

Scarlett plays her cards perfectly, luring Rhett in by telling him how good things are at Tara and how everyone there is doing well. Rhett starts to believe her until he sees her hands, which are calloused and freckled from the fieldwork she has been doing. Rhett makes her tell him the truth, and she tells him that she wants to borrow money. After getting her to agree to be his mistress for collateral on the loan, he tells her that it is no good, as he cannot access his money, for if he tries to draw a draft from his accounts the Yankees will take it all. However, he promises to leave her money in his will for when they hang him. Scarlett leaves, telling him that she hopes they hang him soon enough to pay the taxes on Tara.

Chapter 34 Analysis

Scarlett tries hard to remember her coquettish ways, but Rhett sees just how much she has truly changed. Scarlett can no longer look him in the eye when she is trying to be the charming belle, as she knows he will see that her personality has changed too much now and it will show on her face. The war has taken a toll on Scarlett O'Hara that is now starting to show.

We also see that, despite Rhett's savvy by hiding his money, that Scarlett is once again disappointed by the men in her life. Scarlett will have to rely on herself once again to find a way to save Tara.

Scarlett, in a way, also breaks through a belief that equates all Yankees with being bad people. The soldiers she meets at the Yankee headquarters treat her well, and her beliefs about them are countered by their actions. The readers see again that Scarlett is growing as her opinions are being based on a person's actions rather than their title.



Chapter 35

Chapter 35 Summary

Dejected, Scarlett heads back to Aunt Pitty's thinking only of how she is going to save Tara. Scarlett runs into Frank Kennedy on the way and learns that he has purchased a store and is thinking of buying a sawmill. Frank stands to make a lot of money with all the rebuilding going on in Atlanta. Scarlett realizes that she must marry Frank Kennedy in order to save her beloved plantation, and she lies to Frank, telling him that Suellen is engaged to marry Tony Fontaine.

At the Elsing wedding, Scarlett looks around her at all the poor people and realizes that there is a difference between herself and the other Southerners. Scarlett sees them holding onto their southern pride. The ladies still feel like ladies, but Scarlett does not. Scarlett knows that Ellen would want her to think like these people, but she does not. Scarlett is focused on the future, and she would rather have Tara, money, and food on her table than the pride to which these Southerners were clinging at the expense of their wealth.

Chapter 35 Analysis

In Scarlett's moment of desperation comes something very clear to her. Scarlett is not like these Southerners. Though from the beginning, the reader understood that Scarlett never held dear to the Southern way of life, she had not realized it for herself. In this moment, she sees that she is willing to do almost anything to not be put in the desperate position again, even if it means stealing her sisters' beau to save her land.



Chapter 36

Chapter 36 Summary

After two weeks of struggling to get Frank to take the hint that she wanted to marry him, they finally did marry. Scarlett sent Mammy home with the money for Tara, to bring news of the wedding, and to have her return with Wade. Scarlett then receives a relieving letter from Will letting her know that the taxes had been paid, which angered Jonas Wilkerson greatly, and some unfeeling congratulations her on her nuptials. Scarlett knows that Will understands perfectly what she did and why, but she is concerned as to what Ashley must think of her. The town is already whispering. However, it is no matter, for Tara is safe for the moment.

Two weeks later, Frank becomes ill with la grippe and Scarlett runs the business at the store. Scarlett sees how appalling his stocks and books are, and begins to pressure those who owe Frank to pay. Scarlett knows they will need the money to purchase the sawmill that Frank had been considering. Frank had just been too much the gentlemen to ask his friends to repay their debts.

After blackmailing his way out of jail, Rhett comes into the store to offer sarcastic congratulations after learning of her marriage to Frank. Rhett teases Scarlett that if she had just waited a little longer, she could have shared in his wealth. After reprimanding him for insulting Ashley, she asks him to borrow money to purchase the sawmill. Rhett promises to lend her the money as long as she does not use a cent to help Ashley Wilkes.

Frank is humiliated first because Scarlett has bought the mill and determines to run it on her own, and then that she is so successful and ruthless with it. Frank was not used to a woman who was so skilled with masculine devices to be powerful. Scarlett wanted to be a good wife, but Frank so often tried her patience with his gentle attempts to guide her. Fearful of her temper, he hopes that a baby will help calm her down a bit.

Chapter 36 Analysis

In the previous portions of the novel, gender roles were defined and Scarlett's thoughts were from a woman who used them but did not like them. After the war, Scarlett no longer feels a need to live under the oppressive rules that had thus far defined her behavior. Scarlett feels that the need to survive is much more powerful than the need to look good to the neighbors. This belief is shared by only one other character, Rhett Butler, bringing to mind what he had told her at the start of the war about feeling free when not bound by the roles society places on her.

However, while Rhett has more fun and is more lighthearted about this freedom, Scarlett is more ruthless. Scarlett sees only the days of poverty to drive her further in

making the business successful. Though she misses Tara and cannot return there due to her marriage, she still vows to keep it safe.

Scarlett's defense of Ashley shows a subconscious desire to hold onto something beautiful of the Old South. By clinging to her love for him, Scarlett holds onto the one last remnant of a way of life she did not appreciate, but thought she should love.



Chapter 37

Chapter 37 Summary

Tony Fontaine shows up at Frank and Scarlett's doorstep. Tony is soaked to the bone after fleeing from Jonesboro. Ashley sent him to Scarlett and Frank for help after Tony killed Jonas Wilkerson and the black man who used to be the Fontaine's foreman. Apparently, Jonas had been keeping the freed slaves riled up and told them that they now had the right to take white women. The black man was drunk and went after Tony's sister-in-law, but Tony shot him.

After giving Tony a horse and some money so he could flee to Texas, Scarlett, Frank, and Aunt Pitty begin to feel the wrath of the Yankees seeking to hang Tony. Scarlett fears that she will lose everything again after working so hard to make the money that made her feel safe. Scarlett is torn between being angry with the Yankees or being angry at Tony for bringing this on her.

While the Yankees and the Freedman's Bureau struggle to figure out what to do with the freed slaves, Scarlett only worries about how to make enough money to feel safe. Freed slaves were given money and power, while Old South families lived in poverty. Scarlett is frustrated by Frank's talk of voting and rights and blurts out that she is pregnant.

The Ku Klux Klan has sprung up in Atlanta in response to the power of the Yankees, black people, and carpetbaggers. Scarlett realizes that the Yankees are bound and determined to destroy the Klan and its members. Scarlett is glad that Frank has no part in it.

Chapter 37 Analysis

Scarlett is faced with yet another consequence of reconstruction when Tony shows up at her home after killing two men. The Yankees come in and turn everything upside down, and Scarlett fears losing everything she has worked to rebuild. Scarlett has seen people jailed on less than the suspicion of helping a murderer.

This situation allows Mitchell to explore the underlying currents in the South at the heart of reconstruction. While Atlanta has turned back into a boomtown, the members of the Old South are still suffering under Yankee oppression. However, the Yankees are beginning to feel the pressure of letting all of the slaves go at once. The Yankees find that the slaves are lazy, drunk, and stupid. Though Mitchell gives the impression that black people are just that way, she does not think that it may have been the South's own oppression of these people that created the problem in the first place.

The southerners believe that things were always fine until the Yankees got involved. Mitchell's southern characters believe that the Klan was created out of necessity and

protection than out of rage, anger, and disappointment. Instead of being angry with themselves or the Yankees, the Klansmen channel their anger toward black people.



Chapter 38

Chapter 38 Summary

It is the spring of 1866, and Scarlett is determined to have the mill established enough for her to leave it when she has the baby in June. Though the Old South citizens in Atlanta are appalled at Scarlett's decision to do business with the Yankees, Scarlett does it to make money. Scarlett secretly despises them. Scarlett is ruthless now to make sure she has enough money stored away when she cannot go out in public any longer due to her pregnancy. Scarlett is frustrated that there just does not seem to be a convenient time for death, taxes, or childbirth.

One day, three Yankee women stop Scarlett to ask if she knows where to find a good nurse, and Scarlett tells them to find a 'darkie' to help. The women are appalled, telling Scarlett that they do not trust black people, calling them savages, and Scarlett notices how upset Uncle Peter is sitting next to her. Scarlett, angry, tells them that Uncle Peter is part of the family and they drive off. Scarlett is angered by their demeaning words, but she is more ashamed when she is chastised by Uncle Peter for not coming more to his defense. Scarlett cannot wait for the day when she has enough money to feel secure enough to tell these women off to their faces.

Rhett returns to town gambling and working on moneymaking schemes most of the time. Rhett is still hated by most of the old Atlanta citizens. Rhett would drive by and they would meet "accidentally" every day, and he would drive her on her errands causing much gossip throughout the town. Rhett explains to her one day that there is a consequence to her desire for money - loneliness, and Scarlett realizes that she has no companions. Scarlett has Melanie, but Melanie is back at Tara.

Scarlett is angry about having to have the baby and tells Rhett how much she hates children. Scarlett is shocked when he tells her that he loves kids, it is when they grow up that he finds them contemptible. To help Scarlett quiet her nerves every night, she has taken to sipping brandy, however there were nights in which something still seemed to be missing, and she knew it was home. Scarlett resolves to go home in June, after the baby. Scarlett does go home, but it is with a sad heart, for Gerald has passed away.

Chapter 38 Analysis

Scarlett has come to a point in her life where making money is more important than anything. Scarlett has nightmares at night about the starvation and hardships that she has survived, and Scarlett has seen money as her only salvation. Yet for all of Scarlett's hard edges and compromises to make her money, she is still fiercely loyal to the black people who have cared for her all of her life. Scarlett is enraged by the treatment the Yankee women give Uncle Peter, after all he has done for Aunt Pitty, and she vows to get revenge when she is financially protected.



This loyalty of Scarlett's has been criticized by readers who know that not all slave owners treated their slaves as well as the people described in the novel. Mitchell treats the Yankee woman's accusations and beliefs about slave owners as hogwash, but many of the stories are historically founded. However, the loyalty that Scarlett shows toward Uncle Peter is also a sign that Scarlett has not completely hardened, nor that she has given up completely on the Old South. Scarlett longs to gain a feeling of security first over revenge.

Rhett's discussions with Scarlett cause some scandalous whispers in the community, but Scarlett enjoys being able to talk with a man so frankly. Scarlett knows how alike they are, that is why she is shocked by his liking of children. However, she also realizes from her talks that she is fairly lonely. The only woman who ever showed Scarlett anything near friendship was back at Tara. Readers see Scarlett's sharp view of her peers, but also her own insight into their own dislike of her.



Chapter 39

Chapter 39 Summary

Scarlett returns as fast as she can to Tara. Ashamed of her pregnant state, she waits for Will to pick her up from the station thinking of how she wishes that she could have a new dress to cover up her pregnancy. While waiting, Alex Fontaine rides by and cryptically tells her how the whole town is ashamed of what Suellen has done. Scarlett, who can barely stand to hear her father's name tells him not to talk about it, but is curious as to what Suellen could have done.

Will arrives to pick her up and tells her that he has some news. Will would like to marry Suellen. Scarlett asks why not Careen, and he tells her that Careen is planning to go into the convent, as she never got over the death of her beloved Brent. Scarlett does not understand, but promises Will that she will not prevent it. Scarlett realizes how much he loved Careen to let her go. Will tells her that he loves Tara, and he thinks that he and Suellen will get on there fine. However, she knows that there is more to his story, and pushes him for the information.

Will tells her that Suellen is a girl who likes pretty things, and she was longing to get back at the Yankees who burned their cotton years ago. When they were in Jonesboro, she had overheard some women discussing an oath to the Union, where the U.S. would repay anyone the damage to their land if they signed the oath. Suellen, thinking that Gerald would not know since he was out of his mind most of the time, took him to Jonesboro to take the oath. Scarlett is appalled at first that her sister would consider such treason, but is more understanding when she hears it is \$150 thousand.

Suellen's plan did not work, and Gerald came to his senses just as he was going to sign the oath. Angry, he ran out and got even more drunk than Suellen had gotten him. On his way back to Tara, he jumped fences with the horse he stole from Alex Fontaine, but at the last jump, the horse stopped and Gerald was thrown. Will tells her that it was quick, as he broke his neck. Saying nothing more to one another, they ride up to the house.

Chapter 39 Analysis

Scarlett's cutthroat nature is developing, which allows her to have sympathy for Suellen when she hears the amount of money involved in taking the oath. However, Scarlett also preserves some of her Southern pride by not doing it herself. The rest of the county may not be as forgiving. Just from Alex Fontaine's attitude, we can see that Suellen committed a bigger sin against the South than anything Scarlett is doing in Atlanta. The men of the county consider Gerald a hero, and his death just enhances their drive to rebuild and strengthen.



Scarlett continues to grow in admiration and respect for Will. Scarlett sees in him a sacrifice to let Careen go when she knows how much he loves her and she can also respect a man that loves her Tara as much as she does.



Chapter 40

Chapter 40 Summary

Scarlett looks at Tara the next morning and is grateful for Will's efforts to keep Tara from returning to wilderness. Though not the plantation it once was, Will tells her that she will no longer have to send money after this season, as the crop will pay for the upkeep of Tara. Scarlett owes him so much, and knows that it is Will that kept Tara going, not Ashley, which saddens her.

At the funeral, Ashley does the service, starting off with the Catholic reading and then going into a Protestant service - lost on Scarlett and Suellen, but very apparent to Careen and Melanie. Ashley defers to Will to say a few words, and he shocks everyone there by announcing his engagement to Suellen. Will then reminds them that the Yankees can push them down, but it is holding on to old ideas that will keep the South down. Then he asks Mrs. Tarleton to take Scarlett and Old Mrs. Fontaine into the house, for they do not look so good.

Scarlett is angry that he pointed out her pregnancy, but Old Mrs. Fontaine admires how he got the two older women that would have told Suellen off over Gerald's grave out of there. Mrs. Fontaine also tells Scarlett that it was his way of sparing her the sound of dirt on her father's coffin.

Grandma Fontaine tells Scarlett how much she admires her for her ability to have a man's sense about things, and tells her that she ought to get all the money out of the Yankees that she needs and then kick them while they are down. Yet she also tells Scarlett that she has no sense about Ashley. Grandma Fontaine tells Scarlett that if the Wilkes are going to get through this time, it will be through Melly's efforts not Ashley's. Scarlett does not understand much of what Grandma Fontaine is saying, as she is reeling from Grandma's harsh words against Ashley. However, she appreciates Grandma Fontaine's support of her, especially when Mrs. Tarleton returns to the room asking Scarlett how she can allow Suellen to marry a cracker, even if it is Will Benteen.

Chapter 40 Analysis

Though Grandma Fontaine's words do not sink in for Scarlett, they show just how far Scarlett has come from the young, calculating belle that she once was. Grandma Fontaine is one of the few women Scarlett knows that does understand, and she is grateful for her.

Will's words to the group at the funeral show just how far the South has to go in regaining control over the land, and how much changing they also have to do. Even though Will has earned the respect of all the people in the county, they still cannot get over his class when it comes to marrying into an Old South family. The people are still

resistant to the change, but it is only a few of them that realize that change has to be made.

Scarlett's idealization of Ashley continues, though it is Grandma Fontaine that sees the most about Ashley not being able to grow with the New South that is at their doorstep. Grandma Fontaine knows that it is Melanie that will have to carry the family. Small, frail Melanie that will hold Ashley together.



Chapter 41

Chapter 41 Summary

After the funeral, Scarlett gives Pork her father's watch. Scarlett tells him that no one stood by Gerald as much as Pork did. Pork tells her that if she was half as nice to white folk as she is to black folk, they would like her a whole lot more. Scarlett tells him to ask Ashley to come see her.

Scarlett tells Ashley that he needs to come help her with the sawmill in Atlanta. Ashley tells her that he has planned to move north to take a job in a bank and he does not think it is a good idea for him to go to Atlanta. Ashley blames himself for Scarlett's situation in life, and believes that he should have done more. Scarlett insists on him coming, offering him half-interest in the sawmill. Ashley tells her that it is still charity, even though she insists he would be living on his own two feet. Ashley knows if he goes to Atlanta, he'll lose any chance he has of actually being able to stand on his own and he also blames it on his being unsure that he will be able to control himself around Scarlett.

Ashley's insistence on going to New York brings Scarlett to sobs. Melanie rushes in, and Scarlett tells her how Ashley refuses to come to Atlanta to help her. Melanie, always in her loyalty to Scarlett, reprimands Ashley harshly. For all that Scarlett has done for them, how can Ashley turn his back on her. In addition, Melanie has been longing to go home to Atlanta. Ashley cannot resist them both and agrees to go to Atlanta, at the expense of his self-preservation.

Ashley and Melanie move into a small house near Aunt Pitty's. India comes to live with them, a full-fledged spinster now. India has more respect, though, since Stuart would have married her had he not died in the war. Beau's birth and the work at Tara had taken a toll on the already frail Melanie. Melanie was not well, but she was loved and respected by almost everyone in Atlanta and she was becoming a leader of the new society.

Scarlett, unable to run her own mill, notices that it is losing money with Ashley in charge, so she decides to hire Johnnie Gallegher and lease convicts to work the Mill. Though Johnnie is unscrupulous, she thinks that Ashley could learn to run the Mill with a firmer hand. Upset that she has to resort to hiring this man, she decides that she will not have any more children.

Chapter 41 Analysis

In this chapter, Ashley's defeat grows even deeper. Scarlett, having Ashley on a pedestal, does not see that he is holding on to his dignity by a thin thread. Ashley knows that if he goes to Atlanta he will never be his own man. Ashley is the Old South, bred to read and recite poetry and he has no skills. Scarlett cannot see that. Ashley is the one thing she has left of a youthful life that she lost.



The readers also see Melanie growing into the strong, confident lady that she was meant to be. Melanie is the one that controls the house, and she is turning more into the figure Ellen once was before the war. Though physically weak and frail, she has an inner strength that earns the respect of the Old Southerners and the young girls who do not remember a way of life before the war.

Scarlett's decision to use convict labor in her mill is out of desperation. Many men were trying to build their own businesses, and Scarlett can only turn to unscrupulous measures to make her business successful. Scarlett knows Ashley is no help, but continues to idealize him.



Chapter 42

Chapter 42 Summary

Scarlett has a baby girl named Ella Lorena, who is ugly and much like her father, Frank. Scarlett lies in bed after the birth thinking about how grateful she is that Ashley and Frank are not in the Ku Klux Klan, as the Yankees had been arresting people right and left for attacks on the blacks living in the local shantytown. The shantytown, where many raggedy freed slaves and poor white people were living, was on the way to the sawmills, so Frank forbids Scarlett from returning to the mills to work.

In order to help Scarlett, Melanie sends over a one-legged ex-murderer that she had been allowing to live with her, named Archie to drive Scarlett around town. After driving Scarlett around town, he began driving other women, too. Archie tends to be rude and intimidating, and when Scarlett finds out that he was once in prison for murdering his cheating wife, she is shocked that Melanie would have him living in her home.

One night upon returning from the mill, Scarlett finds out from Uncle Henry and Ashley that the Georgia legislature voted down an amendment allowing blacks citizenship, and she knows that the Yankees will be even harsher on them.

Meanwhile, Archie tells Scarlett that if she is intent on hiring convicts to work in her mills, he will quit driving her around town. However, Scarlett knows that convict labor is cheaper than what freed slaves would cost her. Scarlett knows Johnnie Gallagher uses a rough hand with the convicts, but he is doing so well with them. Ashley, on the other hand, is not doing as well at his mill, which dismays Scarlett. Plus, true to his word, Archie quit.

Chapter 42 Analysis

Scarlett is continuing to grow in to a true businesswoman rather than the southern gentlewoman that she was meant to be. Scarlett's choice to return to work at the mills after Ella is born continues to demonstrate that making money is still more important to Scarlett than anything else, including her children. The choice to hire convicts further exemplifies how far she will go to make money. Scarlett is willing to put her conscience aside to make money even when she knows Johnnie Gallagher is going to abuse the convicts. Mitchell uses Archie, a convicted wife-killer, to show just how morally reprehensible using convict labor was.

Readers also see that the South is still trying to hold onto whatever power they can when the Georgia legislature votes down allowing blacks to be citizens. Even though they know that the Yankees will probably retaliate, they stand by old values. Ashley voices the position many Southerners are in when he tells Scarlett that he is not sure what is best for Georgia. Ashley is representing an Old South that is resisting a new way of life, yet seeing that it is inevitable.



Chapter 43

Chapter 43 Summary

Rhett returns to Atlanta after being away for months. Rhett confronts Scarlett on the fact that she has hired Ashley to work in one of her mills, when he had said the one thing she could not do was use the money he lent her for the mills to assist Ashley Wilkes. Since she backed out of her word, he tells her that he will never lend her another penny, even though she has already repaid him, with interest. This news disappoints Scarlett, as she was going to ask him to borrow money for an additional sawmill.

Scarlett tells him that he is jealous, which prompts an argument between the two of them about Ashley. Rhett tells her that Ashley has got to be more defeated than the other Southern gentleman, because he is aware that he is being winnowed out. Rhett asks Scarlett about how she got Ashley to agree to come to Atlanta, and tells Scarlett that she is truly an honest rogue. The comment offends Scarlett, and she tells Rhett that being a gentlewoman was not possible with the situation she was in at Tara. Rhett reminds her, though, that she is no longer in that situation, but she has changed too much to turn back.

As he leaves, he gives Scarlett a piece of advice. Rhett wants her to encourage her husband to stay home more at night and he laughs as he walks away, when Scarlett thinks that he means Frank is having an affair.

Chapter 43 Analysis

The consequences of Scarlett's actions are beginning to come to fruition, now with Rhett coming to tell her that he will not lend her any more money. While he admires her business sense, he feels betrayed that she hired Ashley when he specifically asked her not to support him with the money he lent her.

Scarlett is disappointed, but is more angry that Rhett sees through her actions. Rhett knows that she loves Ashley, but he is also aware that she has no idea who Ashley really is. Rhett is shocked to realize Ashley's depth, and is saddened that Ashley will be tormented by his own understanding of the loss of his way of life. While most of the men of the South kept fighting against the tide, they will die never knowing exactly what they lost. Ashley will live with that understanding for the rest of his disappointing life.

Rhett's last comment as he leaves confuses Scarlett. Scarlett does not realize that Rhett is telling her that Frank is part of the Ku Klux Klan, and the Yankees are watching. Scarlett thinks that he is just taunting her by trying to say that Frank would have an affair and she is affronted, as Frank is not a man who has affairs.



Chapter 44

Chapter 44 Summary

That March, Scarlett is making the risky drive to the mill by herself. Scarlett has caused many murmurs throughout the town with her willingness to drive around unescorted. Yet, there had been a number of incidents in the Shantytown along the road that Scarlett had to drive, so she had also taken to carrying a pistol in her lap. Scarlett had been verbally tormented by male and female residents of the shantytown lately.

This day she heard someone yelling for her and saw Big Sam running toward her buggy. Big Sam told her that he was only stopping through the shantytown on his way back to Tara and he was tired of being free. Big Sam had gone north with an officer, but everyone up north either wanted to know how abused he was at Tara or they were afraid of him. So he wanted to go back to work for the O'Hara's. Scarlett told him that she would return to the bridge after her visit to the mills to pick him up so she could help him get back to Tara.

At the mill, she finds out that Johnnie Gallagher has been taking much of the food for himself while starving and whipping the convicts. Scarlett confronts him, but he tells her that he will quit if she tries to intervene. Knowing that he is making her too much money, she reluctantly leaves.

Scarlett returns to the spot to pick up Big Sam, but she is instead attacked by a poor white man and a freed slave. Scarlett tries to shoot them, but misses. Sam appears and kills one of the men, and they ride back home, Scarlett in tears

Chapter 44 Analysis

Scarlett's descent into immoral territory takes another dive when she allows Johnnie Gallagher to continue starving the convicts. Though a moral voice rises up in her, she suppresses it with the thought that she could lose money. Scarlett's fear of being poor again fuels Scarlett turning against all of her teachings.

Also, we see a viewpoint of many Southerners at the time that black slaves could not live on their own successfully without their owner's guidance. The shantytown is full of the types of people that the Southerners view as those that could not handle freedom, or bad slaves. The good slaves, like Big Sam, want to remain loyal to their families. Big Sam represents what most Southerners believed the ex-slaves should do and return to their owners.

The representation of good slave versus bad slave in the novel has come under harsh criticism. However, it is important to remember that the thoughts and ideas in the story were true of the people at that time. It is not a commentary on today's racial relations but the perceptions Southerners had at that time.



Chapter 45

Chapter 45 Summary

Upon Scarlett and Big Sam returning to the house, they send Big Sam off to Tara immediately. Frank tells Scarlett that he has to go to a political meeting, and she should go to Melanie's house. Scarlett is appalled that he would go to a political meeting after what had just happened to her.

At Melanie's, the other three women seemed tense, and India kept glaring at Scarlett. Scarlett confronts her, and India begins to blame her for the danger in which she has placed their men. Scarlett does not understand, and yells at them to tell her what they are hiding. The women are interrupted by Rhett, who demands to know where the men are, as the Yankees are on their way to arrest them. Melanie tells him, and Scarlett demands to know what is going on. Melanie tells her that the Klan went to clear out the shantytown where Scarlett was attacked earlier. Scarlett is shocked to find out all the gentlemen she knows are in the Klan.

Rhett returns with Ashley and Hugh Elsing, and tells the Yankees who are waiting at the house wanting to arrest them that the men were with him at Belle Watling's, and Ashley has gotten embarrassingly drunk. Ashley collapses in a chair. The Yankee's leave, taking Rhett's word and Scarlett realizes that Ashley is injured. In her concern for Ashley, she forgets about Frank for a moment, but when she asks Rhett where Frank is at, he tells her that Frank has been shot through the head.

Chapter 45 Analysis

The Ku Klux Klan takes prominence in this chapter, and we see the South's perspective as the Klan being a necessary way to keep Southern order. Almost every southern gentleman in Atlanta is a member. It is another way that the Southern people were trying to hold onto an old way of life.

Nobody tells Scarlett about Frank or Ashley's membership in the Klan, as she had so violently opposed it. Again, we are faced with Scarlett's willingness to move toward a New South while many of those she knows and cares about are still clinging to old beliefs. Scarlett is also seeing more consequences to her actions as she worries that Ashley may have been killed in the action that night.



Chapter 46

Chapter 46 Summary

Throughout the night, Yankees knocked on almost every ex-confederate family's door, and the next day most of the men had been called into a Yankee court. However, the testimony of Belle and Rhett offers the men an alibi that clears them of all charges. The alibi that the men had been at Belle's that night may have saved the men, but it also allowed the Yankees to laugh at the proud men of Atlanta. Dr. Meade and others express an even deeper dislike of Rhett, and many of them blame Scarlett for their situation and Frank's death.

Melanie attempts to visit Belle to thank her for lying to save Ashley. Belle tells Melanie that she cannot call on a woman like her, but she has always respected Melanie since she was the only woman willing to take her money for the hospital. Belle tells Melanie that she has a son at school, so she wanted to make sure that Melanie's boy did not end up fatherless. Belle begins to tell Melanie that she would not have done anything had it been Scarlett's husband, but Melanie defends Scarlett. Belle apologizes and tells Melanie that she need not say anything to her if they see each other on the street. However, Melanie tells Belle that she will be proud to talk to her in public.

Chapter 46 Analysis

The deep divide between the Yankees and the Southern gentlemen grows deeper as the men are mortified that the Yankees now think the gentlemen have been knocked off their high horses. The Yankees do not see that they are part of the problem, and they try to blame the Southerners for what is happening to them. Meanwhile, the Southerners try to blame the Yankees for all of their problems, when they brought many of their difficulties on themselves. However, their contempt grows for Scarlett and Rhett, because they are moving toward the new South faster, and they do not like it.

Melanie's discussion with Belle shows her slow movement toward a New South while balancing it with her respect for the old ways. The goodness of her heart is evident, and reminiscent of Ellen, as she puts aside old rules and sets out to thank a woman other southerners looked down upon. Even Belle knows her place, and lets Melanie know it.

We see from the conversation between Belle and Melanie that there are still class lines and judgment for behavior. Even Belle looks down on Scarlett, as Belle herself continues to cling to an Old South belief.



Chapter 47

Chapter 47 Summary

Scarlett sits alone in her room, drinking and wallowing in her guilt. Scarlett feels she has killed Frank by manipulating him into marriage and then sending him to avenge her attack and she wishes Melanie was there to comfort her. Just as Scarlett is wondering whether the whole town thinks that she killed Frank, too, Rhett shows up at the door. Mammy tries to tell him to go away, but Scarlett agrees to see him.

Downstairs, Rhett tells Scarlett that the cologne she has gargled with is not working and teases her about drinking alone. Scarlett tells him that she has been drinking because it is her fault that Frank is dead. Then she tells him that she is glad her mother is dead so she does not have to see Scarlett like this. Rhett tells her that she is like the thief who is not sorry that he stole, but truly sorry he got caught.

Rhett surprises Scarlett and asks her to marry him. Scarlett is shocked, as she is in mourning, but he tells her that he will not wait for her to run off and marry some other man while he is out of town. Scarlett tells him that she will not marry again, but he reminds her that she has been married to a boy and an old man and he wants to marry her for fun. Then he kisses her passionately, which makes her dizzy and weak in the knees. In her stupor, she agrees to marry him upon his return from his trip.

As promised, Rhett brought back a gaudy engagement ring. Though much of Atlanta believes the marriage to be scandalous, Scarlett marries Rhett and goes on her honeymoon to New Orleans. The town continues to hold the two in contempt, not just for the marriage, but also for the new Republican governor that was elected and was a friend of Rhett Butler's.

In New Orleans, Scarlett tells Rhett that Mammy disapproves of the marriage, calling the both of them mules on a horse harness. Rhett laughs and tells Scarlett it is the truth. Scarlett also vents about the town being so rude about them marrying, as she has always minded her own business. However, he tells her to forget about Atlanta, as he brought her to New Orleans to have fun.

Chapter 47 Analysis

Periodically throughout the novel, Scarlett faces her own conscience. The death of Frank makes her think that she may have been doing something wrong. Scarlett at first thinks of Melanie to comfort her, but it is Rhett who comes to the door. Rhett listens to her talk of Ellen, and how her mother would be so ashamed to see how far Scarlett has come from her teachings. It is on another occasion that Scarlett knows what she should be versus what she actually is.

Rhett's desire for Scarlett grows, and he knows this is probably his only opportunity to get her. Rhett and Scarlett have come to represent all that is wrong about the New South versus the Old South. Their anger toward the pair is again fueled by the way that they dismiss the old southern ways, also made worse by the election of a new Republican Governor.



Chapter 48

Chapter 48 Summary

Scarlett loves New Orleans. The men are a little wild and everything is flashy and fun. Scarlett buys the children, the Wilkes, and Pitty gifts, but she refuses to purchase anything for Mammy after the mule comment. However, Rhett decides to purchase her a red taffeta petticoat, even though Scarlett tells him that Mammy will never allow herself to wear it.

With Rhett, Scarlett realized that marriage was different. Scarlett no longer had all the control in the marriage and she did not love him, but she found him exciting. Rhett learned that he had many moods and a lot of cynicism. Yet she still did not know who he really was. One night in bed, Rhett realizes that Scarlett is daydreaming about Ashley, and they argue. However, she has another nightmare that night about running through the mist searching for something. Yet she does not know what it is she is searching for.

Rhett holds Scarlett, comforting her, and tells her that he is going to build a house for her, as he will not live at Aunt Pittypat's. Scarlett tells him that she wants a Swiss Chalet style home that is so ornate it will turn the whole town green with envy. However, he reminds her that none of his money is to go to Ashley, and he will watch the books to make sure.

Chapter 48 Analysis

Rhett begins to emerge in this chapter as Scarlett's true counterpart. Rhett is what completes Scarlett, though she does not realize it yet. Rhett is the one man that does not cower to Scarlett's strength or stubbornness and he is also the only man that has ever aroused true passion in Scarlett. However, she has shared passionate moments with Ashley, Rhett's passion runs deeper in Scarlett.

Readers also see that, though Rhett likes to have fun, he has an instinct about what is going on around him in society. Rhett had hoped that Scarlett's tastes would turn classic rather than gaudy. Rhett sees the new governor as contemptuous, but ultimately knows that the governor will not last. Rhett also knows Scarlett, and continues to be jealous of her desire for Ashley. Even though he knows it is her way of holding on to what she cannot have, it is our clue as to his true feelings for Scarlett. Rhett may deny that he loves her to her face, but his actions show us otherwise.



Chapter 49

Chapter 49 Summary

At Melanie's home, Mrs. Elsing and India begin bad-mouthing Scarlett in front of Melanie. Melanie defends Scarlett, reminding them that Melanie would probably be dead or living up in New York if it were not for Scarlett. Melanie ensures that the Old Southern women will call on Scarlett in her new home at least once.

Meanwhile, Scarlett is overseeing the building of her new mansion. Scarlett begins making friends with Scalawags, Carpetbaggers, and Republicans, shunning many of the old families. At her party, the old families come, but they leave when the new Republican governor arrives, including Melanie. Scarlett expresses her anger with Melanie the next day, but Melanie says that she cannot bear to be around Republicans.

Rhett, on the other hand, does not like Scarlett's new friends and he tells her that she sets too much stock in the power they have now, but someday they will all leave Atlanta when the Democrats take control. Scarlett denies that the Democrats will ever regain control of the South again.

Chapter 49 Analysis

The readers continue to see Melanie's emergence as the most respected southern gentlewoman in Atlanta. Melanie's influence over all of the great Southern families is growing, and it is the only tie Scarlett has to the old southern families - not that she knows it.

Scarlett's anger toward Atlanta for looking down on her drive is fueled, as she is determined to make them all jealous with her wealth. Scarlett does not realize that she is only pushing them away. Scarlett's continued refusal to look at anything but the present may cost her everything. Scarlett has replaced the contempt by Old Atlanta with the admiration of Scalawags, Carpetbaggers, and Republicans. Scarlett's attraction to flash versus substance has never been so evident.

However, we also see Rhett's understated devotion to the South rearing up in this chapter. Rhett's underlying contempt for the people who helped him get rich is evident. Though it is not all just Southern devotion, it is also his knowledge that the South will not stay under the Republican's thumb forever that keeps him from having to show any true respect to these "foreigners."



Chapter 50

Chapter 50 Summary

Though Rhett acts cool on the outside, Scarlett sometimes catches him looking at her with a certain waiting look in his eyes. Their life together is generally pleasant, but at times, Rhett teases with a sharp wit. However, when Scarlett finds out that she is pregnant, she lashes out at Rhett and tells him that she is going to terminate the pregnancy.

Scarlett's decision infuriates Rhett, and he blames her new friends for giving her ideas. Rhett banishes them from the house, and he tells Scarlett how women have died trying to have abortions. Rhett has seen it and his fear for her soothes her anger, and she agrees to have the baby.

Months later, Melanie is at the home to help Scarlett with the birth. Melanie is shocked by Rhett's excitement over his baby being a girl. Rhett shares a drink with everyone in the house, including Mammy, who is now wearing the red petticoat.

Meanwhile, Rhett's devotion to his daughter puzzles many of the old southerners, as it seems so out of character for him. Rhett had fired a number of nurses already, and many of the women looked at him with envy, as their husbands did not show this much devotion with their children. The couple decides to name her Eugenie Victoria, for two queens, but after Melanie tells them that her eyes will be as blue as the bonnie blue flag, her name is forever Bonnie Blue Butler.

Chapter 50 Analysis

The development of Rhett's character in these chapters takes him from a like character to Scarlett to a hero of the novel. The reader sees his real love for Scarlett in the way he looks at her and his fear of her having an abortion. Rhett opens up for a moment to Scarlett, but fearful of her finding out his true feelings, he masks it again in sarcasm.

Rhett's love of Bonnie will come to define Rhett even more. Rhett is not like other men who are too proud to love a child. This child is Rhett's and he has never been one to follow rules of conduct, so he pours the love he cannot show Scarlett into their child.



Chapter 51

Chapter 51 Summary

Scarlett decides to head out to the mills now that she is well enough to leave the house. Scarlett has Lou lace her into her stays, but Lou cannot get her waist any smaller than 20 inches. Scarlett decides that she is not going to have any more babies.

At the mill, she is going over the books with Ashley, who begs her to let him use freed slaves rather than convicts. Ashley blames Rhett's influence for her ruthlessness in the business. Ashley stumbles over his jealousy for Rhett, and Scarlett leaves determined to tell Rhett that she will no longer share a bed with him.

Rhett tells her that he could divorce her for refusing him her bed and says that there are other beds out there that will welcome him. Scarlett is offended, but Rhett just reminds her what a child she is. However, after Rhett leaves the room Scarlett is not as happy as she thought she would be with her decision. Scarlett will miss their bedtime conversations and waking up in his arms when she has a nightmare.

Chapter 51 Analysis

The development of Scarlett's feelings for Rhett take another turn in this chapter. Scarlett is excited by Ashley's jealousy, and reacts impulsively as she has always done. However, this time she is regretful of her decision and begins to realize just how much Rhett has come to mean to her.

At the same time, we see Ashley's descent into his own living hell. Ashley loves two women for two very different reasons and he feels that he should have been stronger for both his wife and Scarlett. Ashley reveals a bit of his feelings to Scarlett that he should not have done.



Chapter 52

Chapter 52 Summary

It is a rainy afternoon in Atlanta, and Wade is restless. Scarlett tells him to go next door and play, but he cannot, for all the children are at Rene Picard's birthday party to which he received no invitation. Wade has not received any invitations to any of the parties given by Old Atlanta's children and grandchildren. When Rhett confronts Scarlett, she tells him that Wade has been invited to plenty of the Republican's birthday parties, but Wade tells Rhett that he did not have fun and Mammy considers them white trash.

Angry, Rhett makes the decision that Bonnie will not suffer like Wade and Ella have done, and he sets out to make amends with all of Old Atlanta. Rhett tells Scarlett that he will no longer accept any Republican into his home, and he will spend his days at Belle Watling's denouncing them if Scarlett invites them over. Rhett works hard to gain the older women's respect by letting it slip that he fought in the artillery during the War, and showing his devotion to his daughter. Slowly the women of Old Atlanta come to respect Rhett more, though they still have problems with Scarlett and her associations with the Republicans. The women grow in contempt of her actions while pitying Rhett for having such a wife as Scarlett.

When Bonnie is about two years old, she develops a strong fear of the dark. Scarlett favors a spanking and letting her deal with the dark, but Rhett will not hear of it. Rhett moves Bonnie into his room so that the light will always be burning, and it causes a bit of a scandal amongst the people of Atlanta. Yet, Bonnie's dislike of Rhett's drinking causes him to stop. For the first time in years, Rhett looks and feels younger.

Chapter 52 Analysis

The change in character for both Rhett and Scarlett is evident in this chapter. The readers see Scarlett's dislike of her children and her own selfishness in her dismissal of Wade's sadness over not being invited to the party. Scarlett's inability to experience empathy has always been a part of her character, but it is more contemptible when she cannot see that her own actions are putting her children's happiness in jeopardy.

On the other hand, the thought for the well-being of the children are Rhett's redeeming quality. Rhett devotes himself to Bonnie to the point of spoiling her. Yet he has a way of seeing what is in Wade's head, and he does not want that to happen to his only child. Rhett's respect for some of the ways of the Old South rears up here as he realizes that he wants Bonnie to grow up a Southern gentlewoman.



Chapter 53

Chapter 53 Summary

It is Ashley's birthday and Melanie is throwing a surprise party for him. It is Scarlett's job to keep him busy at the mill until it is time for him to come home, as the planning is running late. Ashley asks Scarlett why she is not at the house helping Melanie plan for his party, and explains that men warn each other of these things so they do not embarrass their wives.

The two begin to talk and reminisce of old times before the war took its toll on all of them. Ashley tells her that when she is old she will still look the same to him and he remembers how she looked at the last barbecue at Twelve Oaks. Ashley wonders what would have happened to him without her. Ashley tells her that he can no longer be sad for it anymore, but he stops short of telling her how he really feels. Scarlett tells him to stop, because he sounds just like Rhett, and he explains that he and Rhett are fundamentally the same.

Scarlett tells Ashley to stop looking at both sides of the question, as no one ever gets anywhere by looking at both sides. Ashley tells her that he only wanted to be himself, but asks if Scarlett really knows where she wants to get to now? The question forces Scarlett to look back, something she had been resisting. Scarlett begins to sob, realizing all that she had lost in these years since the war started, not just the people, but also the way of life. For the first time, she understands Ashley and looks on him as he really is. There is no passion for him anymore, but a friendship and sympathy. Scarlett begins to sob, and he pulls her into a hug to comfort her. However, just at that moment, India, Archie, and Mrs. Elsing walk in on the scene.

Ashley sends Scarlett home so he can deal with the situation, and Scarlett fears that Archie will tell Rhett, which he does. Rhett returns home and forces her to face her humiliation and attend Melanie's party. Rhett does not allow her to explain that the embrace had been fully innocent.

When she arrives at the party, all eyes are on her. Scarlett squares her shoulders and vows that she does not care what anyone thinks. However, she is greatly afraid of what Melanie must think of her. Before anyone can speak, Melanie makes her way to the door, slipping her arm around Scarlett's waist. Melanie asks her to help her receive the guests, as India was unable to attend the party.

Chapter 53 Analysis

Scarlett has spent much of the book always looking at the present to find a way to survive. Now that she has all the money she thought she needed, she is faced with her past and what she has lost. Scarlett realizes that money has not made her happy, and



the only time she has been truly happy was when she was living in the slow, beautiful way things were before the war. It was the last time she felt safe.

Scarlett's realization of everything she gave up is overwhelming to Scarlett. It begins the change in her character and moves her completely into an adult world. Scarlett had clung so deeply to childish fears and beliefs, and she now opens her adult eyes to the world around her. Even Ashley, who has been idolized by Scarlett, is seen as the broken man he is. Scarlett realizes in an instant that her love for him was a childish passion, and now that passion is set aside for friendship and pity.

The embrace, though, is greatly misunderstood by everyone. The readers are never really sure if Melanie believes that it was innocent or if she just understands Ashley and Scarlett better than anyone. Melanie's devotion to Scarlett and her husband is evident in her decision to welcome Scarlett to her party.



Chapter 54

Chapter 54 Summary

Scarlett is now at home, pacing as she goes over the events of the day. Scarlett listens to the sounds downstairs for Rhett to come home, for she fears his wrath. Scarlett decides that she needs a drink and heads downstairs. When she sees Rhett in the dining room, she quietly turns to go back upstairs, but he stops her. Rhett is very drunk and angry.

Rhett asks her how it feels to have Melanie cloak her sins for her. Rhett tells her that he would crush her head if it would get Ashley out of her mind and he explains that he did not care if Scarlett gave Ashley her body, but does mind that she offers him her heart and her mind, which Ashley does not want. Rhett admits that he is the one that wants her heart and mind, and he will never have them. However, this night he is going to make love to her and it will be just her and Rhett in that bedroom. Rhett will make her forget Ashley.

Rhett roughly grabs Scarlett and carries her off to their room. Rhett's kisses are hard and rough. Scarlett is terrified and excited at the same time. When she awakes the next morning, she would have thought the whole wild evening was a dream except for the rumpled pillow beside her. Scarlett is giddy with passion for Rhett, but it is short lived when he does not return home for two days.

When he does step back into the house, he tells her that he has been at Belle's. Scarlett wants to cry, she has been such a fool to believe things would be different. Rhett tells her that what happened the other night will not happen again, and he is going to go to New Orleans and Charleston with Bonnie. Scarlett tries to protest, but he tells her that the violence of the other night will be mild compared to the consequences of her trying to keep him from taking Bonnie.

Chapter 54 Analysis

The violent passion that ensues between Scarlett and Rhett has caused much controversy among many women, but it was not unrealistic to show a man of that time period raping or threatening violence against a wife that refused him her bed. It just was not discussed in the open then.

Rhett's rape of Scarlett stems from his anger and drunkenness, which is also the result of how much he loves her and his overwhelming jealousy of Ashley. Rhett does not understand that she no longer loves Ashley, that she has grown up, and he resigns himself to never having her love. The game is over for Rhett, he has lost, and so he now devotes himself solely to Bonnie.



Scarlett, however, realizes just what she has in Rhett. The passion she so longs for in her life, the man that will not allow her to control him, is what she really wants. Yet she is faced again with the fierce disappointment of not being able to get what she wants. Scarlett is confronted with her own fears of losing him and tries to keep him there by refusing to let him take Bonnie.



Chapter 55

Chapter 55 Summary

After Rhett and Bonnie leave, Scarlett heads over to Melanie's house determined to tell Melanie the truth. Scarlett is prepared to tell all about everything that has happened between her and Ashley over the years and face the consequences, but she is stopped by Melanie before she can tell her anything. Scarlett realizes that she only wants to tell Melanie the truth to make herself feel better, and Scarlett decides that this will be her own cross to bear.

Melanie is angry with all the women of Atlanta who try to put Scarlett down, and says it is because they are all jealous of her. Melanie has broken her ties to anyone who turns her against Scarlett, including India. Melanie has also broken ties with Aunt Pitty, who allows India to continue living with her. The sweet woman brings Scarlett with her everywhere to show her loyalty and to force people to see her true devotion and belief in Scarlett's innocence. Though Scarlett sees that people do not necessarily believe her innocence, but they want to show their loyalty to Melanie.

The scandal itself divides the town in two, and though they took sides, no one believed Scarlett to be innocent. The people resented that Scarlett was the cause of a feud that would last generations. However, they were also resentful that India would so blatantly air the dirty laundry of the family, too. In the end, though, some did come to believe Scarlett innocent, not because of Scarlett's virtue, but because of Melanie's strong belief. However, Scarlett knows that, if not for Melanie, she would have become a social outcast.

Chapter 55 Analysis

The tide has turned for Melanie and Scarlett. While Scarlett was the strength that saved Melanie during and right after the war, Melanie is now the strength that will save Scarlett from utter ruin. It is Melanie's growing power among Old Atlanta that allows Scarlett to save any face, and Scarlett knows it. It will only be through Melanie that Scarlett will find redemption, and we see Melanie reaching the same pedestal that Scarlett had once placed her mother upon.

Readers also see Scarlett's continuing adulthood emerging. Scarlett is able to put aside her own impulses to tell Melanie everything in order to save Melanie from having to face the betrayal of her husband and closest friend. Scarlett understands that Melanie must go on believing in her for Melanie's own best interest.



Chapter 56

Chapter 56 Summary

Rhett has been gone for three months, and Scarlett is worried about him and Bonnie. Scarlett has found out she is pregnant, and the surprising news makes her happy. It is the first time she has ever been happy about being pregnant. However, her happiness is short lived when Rhett returns.

When Rhett returns, she can tell that he is still angry. Rhett has no kind words for her, only insults and he coldly teases her about missing him, and his comment brings about her own temper. Scarlett tells him that she is pregnant, and he questions who the father is. Raging and eager to lash out, she tells him that she wishes the baby was anyone else's but his. Rhett tells her to not worry, maybe she will miscarry. When she goes to slap him, she misses and falls down the stairs.

Rhett is beside himself with guilt as Scarlett is delirious with the loss of the baby. Rhett tells Melanie that it is his fault and he has killed her. Melanie goes in to tell Rhett that Scarlett is much better, and he breaks down in tears. At first, Melanie is taken aback, as she has never seen a man cry so openly, but then comforts him as she has so many children. Rhett tells her about his miscarriage comment, and she recoils in fear that he believes the rumors of the affair. When she tells him that she understands, he tells her that she does not understand, and almost reveals that Scarlett loves Ashley, but he cannot. Rhett knows that if he tells her, she will not believe him anyway. Melanie tells him that she would not believe him, and continues to comfort him.

Chapter 56 Analysis

In this chapter, we see how Scarlett has grown to love Rhett and how much she wants him to love her back. Scarlett has never loved her children, but now sees just how wrong she has been and longs for this child. However, Rhett does not see it and lashes out in anger toward Scarlett.

Rhett's own childish comments underline his love for Scarlett and his own pride. However, we also get a glimpse into Melanie's true understanding of the whole picture. Melanie knows how much Rhett loves Scarlett, and she is the one person who knows Scarlett really loves Rhett. Melanie also has an understanding of Scarlett's feelings for Ashley that she has never revealed, as seen in her last comment to Rhett. It is not a denial of the situation, but an understanding of the true underlying feelings.



Chapter 57

Chapter 57 Summary

A month later, Rhett puts the pale, thin Scarlett on a train back to Tara with the fearful Wade and Ella in tow. Scarlett felt that she could not stay in Atlanta any longer, and she needed to return to Tara to regain her strength. Scarlett did not want to think about her situation and again promised herself that she would think about it tomorrow when she was strong enough.

Meanwhile, Rhett pays Melanie a visit. Rhett asks Melanie to take some money from him so Ashley can buy out Scarlett's shares of the mill. Melanie tells him that it would be nice to have the extra money from the mill, as finances were very tight for them, but she tells Rhett that Ashley would never take the money from him. Rhett agrees that they must keep where the money came from between the two of them. Scarlett and Ashley can never know. The two agree to make it seem like the money came from someone Ashley had helped in the war.

Scarlett returns from Tara looking much more healthy and full of County news. Scarlett puts on a cheerful face for Rhett, but she was sad at the sight of the run-down County that she had once loved. Rhett plays his part perfectly telling Scarlett that Ashley wants to buy the mills, but that he knows she would not sell. Just to defy him, she does sell the mills - regretting her decision almost immediately. Ashley tells her that he is going to fire Johnnie Gallagher and hire freed slaves. Scarlett argues with Ashley about hiring freed slaves, and he tells her that he cannot bear to make his money on the misery of others. Ashley reminds her that his slaves were not miserable, and he would have freed them regardless of the war after his father died. Rhett silences Scarlett when he asks her if her money has made her happy.

Chapter 57 Analysis

Again, we see that Scarlett gets her strength from Tara. When things are bad and she returns to the plantation, she always returns with a renewed strength. However, we also see the toll the war and Reconstruction has taken on the once beautiful land, as most of it is overcome with weeds and returned to the wilderness. Even Tara is not what it once was.

However, Rhett continues to work behind the scenes to benefit Scarlett and Bonnie. Rhett knows that Bonnie's future depends on the Butlers becoming more respectable, so he schemes to get Scarlett to sell her stake in the mills. Rhett also knows that it will allow Ashley to gain some independence and pride again, which he uses to get Melanie to deceive her husband. Rhett also speaks a truth to Scarlett that catches her off guard when he points out that her money has not made her happy.

Again, though, we see the aristocracy's distorted view of slavery. Though Ashley tells Scarlett he would have freed his slaves after his father died, he believes that his slaves were never miserable. It is blindness into the plight of the black person in old southern society, that if black slaves were treated well their enslavement did not bother them.



Chapter 58

Chapter 58 Summary

Scarlett sees a change in Rhett that she does not altogether like. Rhett no longer dotes on her or even treats her with his sarcastic attitude. Rhett is indifferent to her, like he no longer cares what she does. It is unsettling to Scarlett.

Scarlett worries, too, as Rhett is out late at night and has been associating with the men of the Klan. Scarlett confronts him about being a member of the Klan, and he laughs at her being so behind the times. Rhett and Ashley had put an end to the Klan, as it was working against the democrats in Atlanta. Rhett tells her that he has joined the Democratic Party and was helping to get a Democrat elected.

Scarlett is confused, because it seemed to her that the Republicans were so entrenched in office, but Rhett tells her that with all of the corruption, many high level Republicans will soon be ousted from office and probably end up in jail. Rhett is working with the Democrats to make sure Bonnie is assured a place in society later.

By that October, Governor Bullock resigns and sneaks out of town. Many of the Republicans, Scalawags, and Carpetbaggers that Scarlett had been associating with also made their way out of town. The South rejoices, as the Democrats are now back in power. However, the situation bewilders Scarlett, despite Rhett's previous warnings. Scarlett is just as confused at his newfound popularity among most of Old Atlanta while she continues to feel their disdain.

Chapter 58 Analysis

This chapter serves to show the end of Reconstruction, which offers the best Christmas Old Atlanta has seen since the war. Scarlett continues to not see the big picture as to what her attitude has done to her reputation. Scarlett cannot understand how the people whose company she had felt freeing were now gone so quickly. Scarlett also does not see how Old Atlanta can embrace a Scalawag like Rhett, but not a woman from an Old Southern family like herself.



Chapter 59

Chapter 59 Summary

Everyone in Atlanta knows that Bonnie Butler is running wild, but no one has the heart to discipline the well-loved child. Scarlett makes feeble attempts to discipline Bonnie, but Rhett will not allow her to even slap the child's hand. Scarlett knows that Rhett is the only one that could possibly control Bonnie, but he does not intend to discipline Bonnie.

Rhett buys the children a pony, but Wade is disinterested and Ella fearful, so the pony named Mr. Butler becomes solely Bonnie's. Rhett teaches her to jump and makes plans to teach her to hunt once she is old enough. Rhett even allows her to wear a blue velvet riding crop, even though the traditional color is black.

One day Bonnie is out riding, and she tells her mother to "watch me take this one," which reminds Scarlett of her father's last words, which sends Scarlett into a panic, but it is too late. Bonnie is thrown from the horse and breaks her neck, dying.

Mammy comes to Melanie begging her to speak to Rhett. Rhett has barricaded himself in his room with Bonnie's body and refuses to let her be buried due to her fear of the dark. Mammy tells Melanie how bad Scarlett and Rhett were being to one another, with Scarlett yelling how Rhett killed Bonnie by allowing her to jump and Rhett telling Scarlett that she never loved her children. However, Mammy's true concern is that Rhett has threatened to kill Scarlett if she holds the funeral the next day, and Scarlett is moving forward with the arrangements.

Melanie comes to the house and Rhett allows her into the room. Mammy sits outside waiting for some sign, and after a number of hours, Melanie comes out to ask her for coffee and to tell her that the funeral will go on as planned. Melanie remains in the room, as she promised Rhett that if he slept, she would keep watch over Bonnie.

Chapter 59 Analysis

Here we see the break in Scarlett and Rhett's relationship. Their troubled relationship comes to a head over Bonnie's death. While Scarlett loved Bonnie for her stubbornness, she also knew it was what caused her death. Scarlett cannot see that her own stubbornness has been contributing to the death of her relationship with Rhett.

The readers also see Rhett's fragility when it comes to losing things that he loves. Rhett is not like Scarlett and he has never really had to deal with losing things that he has truly loved, for there have been few things that mattered to him. Yet, Bonnie's death brings him to a breaking point.

Again, we see the one pillar of strength in everyone's lives - Melanie - coming to the rescue. Melanie is the only one with the compassion and strength to get Rhett to allow

the funeral. Melanie has his respect, which he does not bestow easily. The reader sees that she is the tie that binds them all together.



Chapter 60

Chapter 60 Summary

Scarlett feels something bad is coming. It is in the air. Scarlett does not know what it is, but she can feel it. Scarlett had been angry with Rhett for weeks after Bonnie's death, but now she longs for him to take her in his arms and comfort her. Scarlett is willing to tell him now how much she needs him, but she does not know who Rhett is anymore.

Rhett has taken to drinking a lot and he is unkempt and has to be reminded to change his linens. Many nights he comes home so drunk, if he comes home at all, that Pork has to help him to bed. Scarlett knew that many nights he was at Belle Watling's, and even Belle no longer looked away from Scarlett when she saw her in town. Instead, she gave Scarlett a look of contempt and pity.

Scarlett is confused and lonely. Even Mammy returned to Tara after Bonnie's death. Scarlett has no friends anymore, as she cannot stand to see how little they understand her or any other Southerners. No one of the Old Atlanta families would come visit her now, as they thought her heartless and cold for the strength she exhibited after Bonnie's death. Only Pitty and Melanie spoke to her, and she longed to be a part of that Old South world again, to associate with those old families.

Yet Scarlett realizes that she has let them all slip away, and she is now married to a sodden stranger wasting away before her eyes.

Chapter 60 Analysis

As Scarlett moves further into adulthood, things still confuse her, but she also sees things more clearly. Scarlett is beginning to understand that her actions have pushed away all of the people she longs to have surrounding her in this difficult time. Though she does not take responsibility for her actions, as she still sees them all as necessary for her survival, she misses the Old Southern families greatly.

Scarlett also is beginning to understand her own feelings for Rhett. For the first time, it is not Ashley she longs to run to for comfort, but Rhett. Scarlett misses the way he used to treat her and is confused by his apathy toward her. Scarlett cannot understand how he does not share her strength in situations of loss, as he has not had to live through what Scarlett has lived through.



Chapter 61

Chapter 61 Summary

While Scarlett is in Marietta, she gets an urgent telegram from Rhett telling her that Melanie is ill and to come home immediately. Frustrated that the train is not fast enough, she arrives fearful that Melanie is already dead. Rhett tells her that Melanie has miscarried, even though the doctor told her that another pregnancy would kill her. Melanie had not told anyone, because she knew they would be upset with her. Rhett rushes her over to the Wilkes's home, where he leaves her. Scarlett enters to see Pitty and India.

Scarlett enters Melanie's room and sees that death is imminent. Scarlett realizes that just as Tara has provided her strength, so has Melanie. Scarlett realizes that she owes her life to Melanie, and does not know what she will do without her. Melanie struggles to ask Scarlett to take care of Ashley and Beau. Melanie also tells Scarlett to care for Rhett, for he loves Scarlett so much.

Scarlett leaves the room and seeks out Ashley for comfort. However, she realizes in speaking to Ashley that he truly loves Melanie, that he only thinks of Scarlett how Rhett thinks of Belle Watling. Scarlett also realizes that all of her feelings for Ashley were a schoolgirl's idealization, but now she sees a broken, weak man standing before her.

Chapter 61 Analysis

With Melanie's death, Ashley can no longer cope. Scarlett realizes that she must go on and now perceives Ashley as another child for which she has to provide support. Instead of loving him, she now finds him another burden to carry. It is a major turning point for Scarlett, as she had never let go of her childish belief that he was the pillar of strength.

Scarlett also realizes that Melanie was really the pillar that everyone relied on for strength. With her death, many people do not know where to turn. Scarlett feels that it is just like her mother dying all over again, and she finally sees how Melanie and Ellen are so much alike.



Chapter 62

Chapter 62 Summary

Scarlett returns to the hallway, and everyone is looking at her to lead the way. Scarlett decides to step outside to gain her strength, for she does not know how to hold things together. Scarlett knows she should go back inside, but she cannot bear it so she goes home through the thick fog. Then she realizes that she is lost and begins to recognize the situation as her old dream. As she reaches the house, she realizes what she wants - Rhett.

Suddenly she understands how stubborn and blind she has been and she realizes that it is Rhett's love that has been driving her. While Melanie had stood beside her in all of her fights, it had been Rhett supporting her.

Chapter 62 Analysis

Scarlett is running home, seeking something, and realizing that it is just like her dream. The fog surrounds her, but she finally realizes what it is that she seeks - Rhett. For the first time, she lets go of all the things that she has allowed to blind her, and she makes another great stride in her adulthood. Scarlett finally realizes that she loves and needs Rhett in her life.



Chapter 63

Chapter 63 Summary

Scarlett arrives at the house where the front door is slightly ajar. Scarlett walks into the dining room where Rhett sits, and he asks if Melanie is dead. Scarlett tells Rhett that Melanie is dead and that she wishes Rhett had been there to comfort her. Rhett explains that he could not bear it, as Melanie was the only completely kind person he had ever known, a great lady. Then he tells her that this clears the way for Scarlett to have Ashley.

Scarlett tells him not to start an argument now, as she needs to tell him something. Despite his protests, Scarlett pushes the issue. However, Rhett knows what she is going to say and pleads with her not to tell him, but she tells him that she loves him anyhow.

Rhett asks about Ashley, and Scarlett tells him that Ashley is a poor-spirited creature, but Rhett corrects her. Rhett explains that Ashley is a gentleman, but he is caught in a world that he no longer belongs to and does not know how to live in it. Scarlett does not understand why he is making her declaration of love so difficult for her. Rhett tells her that he once loved her greatly. Rhett tried a number of times to leave town and get her out of his head, but he always had to come back. Rhett married her and had plans to pamper and give her anything she had ever wanted, hoping that she would eventually come around and realize she loved him. Scarlett never did, so he gave up loving her and turned to Bonnie, in whom he saw the Scarlett from before the war. Rhett wanted Bonnie to become the woman Scarlett should have become if the war had never happened. However, when Bonnie died he lost it all.

Scarlett tells him that she is sorry, but he tells her it is not good enough. Rhett no longer feels anything for her but pity and an odd kindness. Rhett warns her not to transfer all of her feelings for Ashley over to him, because he will not be pursued. Scarlett panics, as she does not know what she will do without him. Scarlett asks him what she will do without him and he replies, "My dear, I don't give a damn."

After Rhett leaves, Scarlett is at a loss as to what to do. Scarlett's mind is swirling with confusion and she knows there has to be a way to get Rhett back. Scarlett decides to think about it tomorrow. Scarlett will return to Tara, after all she always had emerged from Tara stronger than before. With the spirit of her people, she determines that she will emerge from this bad situation victorious. After all, "tomorrow is another day."

Chapter 63 Analysis

In the closing chapter of the novel, Mitchell leaves us sad and unknowing of Scarlett's fate. The reader wonders if Rhett and Scarlett will ever find each other again, and we are sad that their timing has been so off. Again, Tara plays the role of Scarlett's source



of strength. Scarlett knows in returning there she will be able to clear her head of confusion and set out on a plan to get Rhett back.

Scarlett truly believes that Rhett is her strength, and again proves herself to be stronger than most men. Scarlett also represents the South, when seemingly defeated rises out of ashes in victory. Scarlett's ability to move away from the past and toward the future is the same as what the South had to do. While Rhett moves toward embracing his past, knowing that he was something missing in his life, Scarlett also moves toward finding a future that embraces all that was glorious about the South. Just as the South is a survivor, so is Scarlett O'Hara.



Characters

Archie

An ex-convict and former Confederate soldier who is taken in by Melanie.

Will Benteen

A former Confederate soldier, Will Benteen is on his way home from the war when his comrade leaves him at Tara because he's fallen ill with pneumonia. The O'Haras nurse him back to health and to show his gratitude he stays to help rebuild Tara. Although only a small "cracker" farmer, Will soon becomes instrumental in managing Tara. He eventually marries Suellen O'Hara.

Bonnie Butler

The spoiled, but adorable daughter of Scarlett and Rhett Butler. She dies tragically at the age of four when she is thrown from her pony.

Rhett Butler

Rhett Butler meets Scarlett for the first time at the Twelve Oaks plantation party and is immediately attracted to her high-spirited nature, eventually falling in love with her and convincing her to marry him. Tall, dark, and handsome with a hint of scandal about him, he succeeds in angering Scarlett when she discovers he eavesdropped on her impassioned conversation with Ashley at the party. Convinced he is no gentleman, Scarlett rebuffs him when he begins visiting her in Atlanta, but his charming manner and sense of fun usually wins her over. His cynicism and pragmatism concerning the Civil War lead him to become a blockade runner instead of a soldier, an occupation that makes him rich, and supremely attractive to Scarlett. His uncanny ability to read Scarlett completely is a source of constant irritation to her because she can never gain the upper hand with him as she does with other men.

After the death of Scarlett's second husband, she agrees to marry Rhett, though their marriage is not happy. Scarlett's persistent adoration of Ashley gradually wears Rhett down. After she and Ashley are caught embracing at the mill, Rhett, in jealous, drunken rage, savagely seduces her by sweeping her off her feet and carrying her up to the bedroom--one of the most famous love scenes ever written. By the time Scarlett realizes her true passion is for Rhett and not Ashley, it's too late. Bonnie, the daughter Rhett doted on, is dead, and he has given up on Scarlett. With nothing left to tie him to Atlanta, he announces that he is leaving. Scarlett pleads with Rhett to stay, asking him forlornly what she will ever do without him. His famous, indifferent reply is, "My dear, I don't give a damn."



Cathy Calvert

One of Scarlett's old friends who is forced to marry the Calvert family overseer after her family loses everything.

Dilcey

An O'Hara slave, Dilcey married to Pork and mother of Prissy.

Hugh Elsing

Hugh is Mrs. Elsing's son and the unsuccessful manager of one of Scarlett's mills.

Mrs. Elsing

Friend to Aunt Pittypat, Mrs. Elsing is one of Atlanta society's most upstanding old ladies.

Grandma Fontaine

A shrewd old lady, part of the Fontaine clan, Grandma Fontaine gives Scarlett advice about surviving difficult times.

Johnnie Gallegher

Johnnie is one of Scarlett's mill managers who abuses the workers in order to generate high profits

Charles Hamilton

Scarlett's first husband and Melanie's brother, Charles dies in the war.

Aunt Pittypat Hamilton

Aunt Pittypat is Charles and Melanie's spinster aunt with whom Scarlett and Melanie stay in Atlanta during the war. She leads a sheltered and pampered life and is incapable of making a decision without the help of her slave, Uncle Peter. Her love of gossip and silly, child-like demeanor make her a constant irritation to Scarlett.



Wade Hamilton

Scarlett and Charles Hamilton's shy son, Wade adores Melanie.

Ella Kennedy

Ella is Scarlett and Frank Kennedy's daughter, a silly girl who takes after Frank.

Frank Kennedy

Frank is initially Suellen's fiance whom Scarlett steals and marries because she needs his money to pay the taxes on Tara. Mild-mannered and old-fashioned, he is shocked by Scarlett's purchase and operation of a lumber mill, which ruins their reputation in Atlanta. He is killed during a Ku Klux Klan raid.

Mammy

Mammy is one of the O'Hara family house slaves, who initially belonged to Ellen. She helped raise the O'Hara girls, and her protective, mothering nature is sometimes overbearing. Scarlett often rebels against her strict standards for ladylike behavior. She remains loyal to the O'Hara family, staying with them after the war and looking down her nose at what she calls, "trashy free-issue niggers." She comes to Atlanta to live with Scarlett permanently after she marries Frank Kennedy.

Dr. Meade

Dr. Meade is husband to Mrs. Meade. Dr. Meade is unable to help Melanie with the delivery of her baby because he must tend to the soldiers wounded during the siege.

Mrs. Meade

An Atlanta lady who heads a hospital nursing committee for a war hospital, Mrs. Meade recruits Scarlett for her committee.

Mrs. Meriwether

Another upstanding matron of Atlanta and friend to Aunt Pittypat, Mrs. Merriwether goes into business selling homemade pies after the war.



Rene Picard

The colorful, Creole son-in-law of Mrs. Merriwether, Rene goes into business with her selling pies.

Careen O'Hara

Careen is Scarlett's meek, religious younger sister who is devastated by Brent Tarleton's death in the war. She eventually joins a convent.

Ellen O'Hara

Scarlett's mother, Ellen is a member of the well-known Robillard family of Charleston. Ellen is known throughout the county as a great lady, and Scarlett longs to be like her. She dies from typhoid fever, which she contracts while nursing the Slattery family through it.

Gerald O'Hara

Gerald is Scarlett's Irish-born father. A rough and wild-spirited man with a penchant for liquor, cards, and horseback riding, his brusque manner belies a gentler demeanor. His two greatest loves are his wife, Ellen, and his plantation, Tara. He relies almost completely on Ellen for the management of Tara. After Yankee soldiers destroy Tara almost totally and Ellen dies, he literally loses his mind. Because Gerald is incapable of rational thought, it is Scarlett that must take over the management of Tara after the war. He dies tragically in a riding accident after becoming upset over the Iron Clad Oath.

Scarlett O'Hara

Vain, flirtatious and utterly self-absorbed, Scarlett O'Hara makes an unlikely heroine. Other qualities, such as her courage and perseverance, ameliorate her bad points and make her an entertaining character. Although not particularly perceptive about people, she has a knack for seeing the reality of things, making decisions and following through on them no matter what she has to do.

It is Scarlett on whom the whole family relies after the war. Her determination to save Tara becomes almost an obsession with her.

One of the most famous scenes of the novel is when Scarlett goes to Twelve Oaks plantation to look for food. Twelve Oaks has been burned to the ground, and the crops have been destroyed, but there is still food left in the slaves' garden. After digging for radishes, Scarlett makes a promise to herself, "As God is my witness, as God is my Witness, the Yankees aren't going to lick me. I'm going to live through this, and when it's



over, I'm never going to be hungry again. No, nor any of my folks. If I have to steal or kill-as God is my Witness, I'm never going to be hungry again." This is a turning point for Scarlett, when she gives up all the trappings of the Southern belle and aggressively pursues financial security. Ironically, even though she longs to be a lady like her mother, everything she must do to save Tara makes her anything but a lady in the eyes of Southern society. Furthermore, she falls in love with Ashley because he's a beautiful gentleman and she wants to be his beautiful lady, not because she has anything in common with him. Scarlett goes after the superficial trappings of ladyhood and love, never recognizing the true thing when she sees it, until it's much too late.

Suellen O'Hara

Scarlett's spoiled, older sister, Suellen proves virtually useless in restoring Tara after the war. Her shameless plan to get Gerald to sign the Iron Clad Oath leads to his death.

Uncle Peter

Uncle Peter is Aunt Pittypat's house slave.

Pork

Pork is Gerald's slave, whom he won in a poker game. Like Mammy, Pork remains loyal to the O'Hara family after the war, assisting with various tasks, such as hunting, around the plantation.

Prissy

Prissy is a slave girl who Scarlett takes with her to Atlanta the first time. She and Scarlett deliver Melanie's baby during the siege of Atlanta.

Big Sam

Former field hand at Tara, Big Sam is recruited to fight in the last days of the war. He saves Scarlett from being attacked by a gang of ex-slaves in Atlanta.

Emmie Slattery

A daughter of the poor Slattery family, Emmie marries the O'Hara's overseer, Jonas Wilkerson.



Beatrice Tarleton

Smart and Brent's mother, Beatrice is known for her hot temper and expert horsemanship.

Brent Tarleton

Twin brothers Brent and Stuart are Scarlett's most ardent suitors. The novel opens with their visit to Scarlett in which they inform her of Ashley's engagement to Melanie. Stuart and Brent are killed in the war.

Stuart Tarleton

Brent's twin brother.

Belle Watling

Belle Watling is the madam of a whorehouse that Rhett Butler frequently visits. He befriends Belle, and subtle references are made to the fact that they had a son together. Together, she and Rhett help protect Ashley and other Ku Klux Klan members from being arrested for a raid on the ex-slaves that attacked Scarlett.

Mrs. Whiting

Another matron of Atlanta, Mrs. Whiting is part of Mrs. Elsing and Mrs. Merriwether's circle of friends.

Jonas Wilkerson

Overseer at Tara, Jonas is dismissed for impregnating Emmie Slattery. He and Emmie later try to buy Tara.

Ashley Wilkes

Ashley is the dreamy, golden-haired gentleman that captures Scarlett's heart. Educated and refined, he is the perfect picture of a Southern gentleman. But unlike Scarlett, he lacks the courage to succeed in the dramatically changed world in which they find themselves after the war. A member of the planter gentility, Ashley has been trained for nothing but the life of a gentleman plantation owner. He can't farm and he proves to be useless as Scarlett's mill manager. He symbolizes a bygone era, and is ruled entirely by his honor. His honor refuses to let him betray the Confederacy to save himself from going to jail during the war. It also prevents him from leaving Melanie for Scarlett, and



keeps him from using the unscrupulous business practices that Scarlett employs to make money at her mill.

All of these honorable actions are incomprehensible to Scarlett, who is nothing if not pragmatic, selfish, and bold. Sadly, Ashley feels himself to be a coward. Rhett, who is supremely jealous of Scarlett's affections for him and scornful of his ideology, sums him up this way, "Ashley Wilkesbah! His breed is of no use of value in an upside down world like ours. Whenever the world upends, his kind is the first to perish. And why not? They don't deserve to survive because they won't fight-don't know how to fight."

Beau Wilkes

Beau is Melanie and Ashley Wilkes' son

India Wilkes

Sister to Ashley, India intensely dislikes Scarlett She catches Scarlett embracing Ashley at the mill along with Archie and Mrs. Elsing.

Melanie Hamilton Wilkes

Melanie becomes Scarlett's sister-in-law after Scarlett marries her brother. Somewhat plain and childlike in appearance, she is generous and kind to everyone, and is regarded as a lady of the first order. Her personality is almost the complete opposite of Scarlett's, although she adores Scarlett. Her inability to believe anything negative about the people she loves causes her to blindly defend Scarlett's scandalous behavior. Scarlett secretly hates her, resenting her marriage to Ashley. Only Scarlett's love for Ashley keeps her on good terms with Melanie, and forces her to stay with Melanie as she delivers her baby, Beau, during the burning of Atlanta.

Melanie's loving nature and humility in the face of her family's financial difficulties after the war make her popular among the upstanding Atlanta ladies who admire her attitude, and they immediately recruit her for their numerous charities and organizations. Her wise and nurturing personality make her the natural choice for people seeking refuge and understanding; she comforts people hurt or rejected by Scarlett, notably Rhett and Wade. Her sharp intelligence about people and her personal strength come into play when she must act quickly to save Ashley from being arrested for his participation in the Ku Klux Klan raid. Taking her cues from Rhett, Melanie ad-libs her way through a brilliant performance designed to elude the police, a performance that Scarlett would never be perceptive enough to carry off. Melanie's death at the end of the novel is a revelation for Scarlett, who realizes that Melanie is the only true friend she's ever had. It is also Melanie, in her final moments before death, who helps Scarlett to see how much Rhett loves her.



Themes

Gender and Social Class Structure

The world presented in *Gone with the Wind* is one defined by rigid gender and social codes of conduct. Clear rules govern the dress, actions, and speech of ladies and gentlemen, and the punishment for transgressions, especially those of a sexual nature, are severe. When Rhett first appears at the Twelve Oaks party, a scandalous rumor circulates about how he is not "received" in his home town of Charleston because he once stayed out all night with a woman and then refused to marry her, damaging both of their reputations permanently. Rhett is not considered a gentleman, a dangerous state, because, as Scarlett explains, "there was no telling what men would do when they weren't gentlemen, There was no standard to judge them by."

Although Scarlett tries to adhere to the social conventions of gender, she feels as constrained by them as Rhett does. When Rhett asks Scarlett to dance at a war fundraiser, she eagerly accepts, shocking Atlanta society by violating the mourning period required for the death of her husband.

Later in the novel, after the war is over, Scarlett feels the training she received from her mother in being a lady is virtually useless to her in such changed and difficult circumstances. She succeeds financially in Atlanta by breaking all the rules, shocking society again when she buys and operates a lumber mill without the help of her husband, Frank Kennedy. Numerous references are made to the fact that this behavior "unsexes" her. Soon, like Rhett, she is not "received" by many families, save Melanie and Ashley's ironically, even the town whore, Belle Watling, condemns Scarlett's "unladylike" behavior.

Mitchell illustrates the social class structure with various characters that represent different levels of society. At the very bottom of the white class structure are the Slatterys, the poor neighboring farmers of the O'Hara family, who own no slaves. Even Mammy looks down on them, calling them "white trash." Next up the ladder are the small farmers like Will Benteen, who own a few slaves and are moderately successful, but certainly not rich. At the top of society are the planter gentility with massive plantations and hundreds of slaves like the O'Hara family and their neighbors, the Fontaines, Calverts, Wilkeses, and Tarletons. The Civil War of course, obliterates these distinctions and everyone must make their own way, regardless of family name.

Financial ruin radically alters social class relations. Melanie and Scarlett are devastated when they learn of the engagement of their friend Cathy Calvert to the overseer of the Calvert's plantation, a man who is definitely "beneath" Cathy. Before the war, the O'Hara family never would have associated with Will Benteen, but Scarlett comes to depend on him to help rebuild Tara. Even among the slaves there is a certain hierarchy—house servants are superior to field hands. After the war, when the field slaves have IW1 off



and Scarlett asks Pork to go catch a sow that has escaped, he refuses at first saying, "Miss Scarlett, dat a fe'el han's bizness. Ah's allus been a house nigger"

Survival

Mitchell herself identified survival as the key theme of *Gone with the Wind*, claiming fascination with the topic of who survives during challenging times and why. In the Reconstruction era following the devastation of the Civil War, Rhett and Scarlett emerge as survivors while Ashley and Melame flounder. The ability that Rhett and Scarlett both possess to assess circumstances realistically and adjust to the changing times greatly benefits them. One of Scarlett's biggest frustrations with everyone around her is that they persist in living in the past. Rhett is the one exception. A true opportunist, Rhett tells Scarlett early in the novel that there is money to be made both in the construction and destruction of a society. Instead of going off to war, Rhett profits from it by becoming a blockade runner, dealing in gold rather than Confederate currency, and keeping his money in stable European banks until the war is over. And Scarlett, seeing how necessary lumber will be for Atlanta's efforts at rebuilding, profits by buying a lumber mill.

At the opposite extreme are Melanie and Ashley Ashley attempts to help out at Tara by farming, but proves a dismal failure. As Will Benteen tells Scarlett, "God knows he tries his best but he warn't cut out for farmin' and he knows it as well as I do ". It ain't his fault. He just warn't bred for it." Later, as Scarlett's mill manager, his poor business sense and moral objections to using convicts and other unscrupulous business practices make him less financially successful than the manager of Scarlett's other mill Groomed for life as the gentleman of a large plantation, Ashley is lost in the new South. His wife Melanie also remains faithful to the memory of the old days, loyal to old traditions. She becomes the leader of a group of Atlanta ladies who dedicate themselves to such organizations as the Association for the Beautification of the Graves of Our Glorious Dead and the Sewing Circle for the Widows and Orphans of the Confederacy. These ladies spend most of their time complaining about Reconstruction and nostalgically looking back to antebellum days, activities that the forward-looking Scarlett cannot tolerate.

Romantic Love

The love triangle created between Scarlett, Ashley, and Rhett drives the narrative. For the majority of the novel, Scarlett believes herself to be in love with Ashley, never understanding how fundamentally different they are from each other. Furthermore, she fails to recognize the feelings she has for Rhett. And though Ashley finally admits to loving Scarlett, because of his honor he will not leave Melanie. Scarlett yearns for people to think of her as a great lady; therefore, she never considers the ungentlemanly Rhett Butler as a serious suitor. More importantly, his annoying ability to expertly read her true intentions makes him the one man she can't easily manipulate.



Scarlett's first two husbands fall completely under the spell of her charms, never realizing she doesn't love them. She marries Charles simply to get back at Ashley for marrying Melanie, and steals Frank from her sister Suellen because of his money. When people admit their love for her, Scarlett takes shameful advantage of them. As Rhett says to Scarlett, "You're so brutal to those who love you, Scarlett. You take their love and hold it over their heads like a whip." Rhett falls in love with Scarlett almost immediately, recognizing a kindred spirit in her. But even though the twice-widowed Scarlett finally agrees to marry him, she lets him know that she does not love him. Over time, she becomes aware of the intoxicating effect he has on her, but by the time she realizes that she loves Rhett, he is worn out by her steadfast love for Ashley. At the end of the novel, Scarlett perceives that "had she ever understood Ashley, she would never have loved him; had she ever understood Rhett, she would never have lost him."

Style

Setting

Set in the tumultuous years between 1861 and 1873, *Gone with the Wind* shifts between two main locales: the O'Hara family plantation called Tara, located in the rolling foothills of northern Georgia; and the bustling, young city of Atlanta. The lush, fertile beauty of Tara and its importance to the O'Hara family is explained early in the novel by Scarlett's Irish-born father, Gerald, "Land is the only thing in the world that amounts to anything... for 'tis the only thing in this world that lasts, and don't you be forgetting it! 'Tis the only thing worth working for, worth fighting for-worth dying for." His words prove true as Southern sons march off to fight in the war a few chapters later to defend the land they love. Tara becomes a symbol of the old South and the lifestyle of the planter gentility, which is destroyed permanently as a result of the Civil War. Ransacked by Yankees at the war's end, Tara is left in ruins and Scarlett struggles to restore it to its former glory.

In sharp contrast to Tara stands the city of Atlanta, Georgia, a symbol of the new South. Mitchell describes Atlanta as a young, prosperous railroad town, more vital and exciting than the older Southern cities of Charleston and Savannah, which she likens to "aged grandmothers fanning themselves placidly in the sun." Although Sherman's troops set fire to the City in the final days of the war, the citizens of Atlanta waste no time rebuilding. Opportunities abound for new businesses as an interesting mix of Northern Carpetbaggers and Southern Scalawags begin to change the face of the town, and Scarlett aggressively pursues a lumber business of her own. Scarlett and Rhett flourish in the Reconstruction South, while characters such as Melanie and Ashley remain firmly tied to the life and customs of the old days.

Point of View

Although narrated in the third person, it is Scarlett whose thoughts and opinions are explored and revealed to the reader. The straightforward, linear narrative follows the course of Scarlett's life and is interrupted only to provide background information or delve into the personal histories of various characters such as the extended description of Scarlett's parents, Gerald and Ellen, in the opening chapters. Privy to Scarlett's true feelings, readers are made aware of her duplicity and manipulation of other characters. Mitchell's use of irony in several scenes throughout the novel depends upon the reader's ability to understand Scarlett's true motives. At the same time, a certain measure of sympathy for Scarlett can be more easily achieved by allowing the reader to enter her thoughts.



Use of Dialogue

Mitchell's characters come alive on the page through her skillful use of dialogue. The unique speech patterns Mitchell phonetically recreates, such as the slaves' black dialect, Will Benteen's "cracker" English and the Northern Carpetbaggers' accents add authenticity to their personalities. Set expressions such as Scarlett's "Fiddle-dee-dee!" or Gerald's "God's nightgown!" as well as Mammy's scoldings and Ashley and Rhett's propensity to quote are memorable aspects of their individual temperaments. And Rhett's cynical, mocking manner is convincingly developed through his irreverent comments. Most interesting, however, is Mitchell's use of dialogue to set and vary the mood of a scene, such as the final scene between Rhett and Scarlett. Rhett's resignation is conveyed almost entirely through his speech. As he tells Scarlett the reasons for his departure, a range of emotions surface, the tenderness of his past love for her, his grief over Bonnie's death, as well as his jealousy and anger over Scarlett's cruel treatment of him and her stubborn love for Ashley. However, all of these feelings are now tainted with bitter regret.

Use of Irony

Because of Scarlett's blindness to human nature, she lacks true understanding of those around her. Her quality, combined with her vanity and selfishness, sets up several ironic situations in *Gone with the Wind*. The overarching irony of the novel, which propels the narrative, is that Scarlett's infatuation with Ashley prevents her from seeing that Rhett is her true soul-mate until it's too late. Closely paralleling this is the fact that Ashley only recognizes the extent of his love for Melanie as she lies dying.

There are many other ironic situations in *Gone with the Wind*. For instance, the one person for whom Scarlett expends significant effort is Melanie, the same woman she desperately wishes were out of the picture it's only because of her promise to Ashley that she doesn't abandon Melanie in the hospital to have her baby alone during the siege of Atlanta. And after Scarlett and Ashley are caught in a compromising situation, Melanie refuses to believe the rumors about them and is the one person who doesn't shun Scarlett. In fact, Melanie remains devoted to Scarlett throughout the novel, a fact that is supremely annoying to Scarlett.

The social upheaval created by the aftermath of the Civil War and the Reconstruction period provides another ironic twist in which Tara's former overseer, Jonas Wilkerson and his new wife EmJnie Slattery, of the "poor white trash" Slattery family, try to buy Tara. Newly rich from Wilkerson's Scallawag job at the Freedmen's Bureau, they drive up to Tara in a fine carriage and beautiful clothes and offer to buy Tara from the now destitute O'Hara family. The O'Haras can't pay their taxes, but Scarlett throws them off the property, insulted that such low-class types would think they could live at Tara. The irony is heightened by the fact that the O'Haras and other wealthy plantation families tried for years to buy the Slattery property, but the Slatterys were too proud to sell.

Historical Context

The Great Depression and Reconstruction Eras

Although Mitchell's 1936 novel *Gone with the Wind* focuses on the Reconstruction years following the Civil War, many of Mitchell's Initial readers living through the Great Depression could identify with the hardships endured by Scarlett and her family. When all the slaves of Tara run off, and Yankees loot the plantation by burning cotton and stealing valuables, the O'Hara family is left with very little. This experience was one shared by many plantation owners in the South, some of whom also lost their land because they were unable to pay the new taxes. Similarly, many people in the 1930s had lost their jobs, savings, and homes after the stock market crash of 1929.

Economic recovery during the 1930s was slow. Those who were lucky enough to keep their jobs often had to take salary cuts. Like Ashley, Melanie, and their son in *Gone with the Wind*, many people moved in with relatives, sharing resources to make ends meet. Others were much less fortunate. Many jobless, homeless people traveled across the country in search of work. Some people who had lost their homes were forced to live in shacks, and lines at soup kitchens grew longer every day.

In order to save money, many Depression-era women began sewing their own clothes and preserving homegrown fruits and vegetables rather than buying them. Some enterprising families made extra money by taking in borders, selling home baked goods, or doing laundry; these home-based businesses were similar to those established by Atlanta families in *Gone with the Wind*.

The cloud of the Depression began to lift as a result of some of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs. The Civilian Conservation Corps, the Public Works Administration, and Works Progress Administration created jobs for people and helped stimulate the economy. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration provided the states with money for the needy. Government policies were passed at this time to ensure that such a widespread and devastating depression would not occur again.

Similar relief programs were instituted during the Reconstruction era. The Southern economy, based mostly on agriculture, had trouble recovering. Southerners financially devastated by the war had little money to invest in business or industry, so state officials worked to attract investment money from the North. State governments also offered financial assistance to various industries such as railroads and banks to spur economic growth and employment opportunities.

The Women's Movement

The time period in which *Gone with the Wind* takes place, 1861 to 1873, was a time in which women had few rights and were not treated as the equals of men. They could not vote and were discouraged from pursuing an advanced education, mainly because they



were considered Intellectually inferior to men Women who did attend college were thought by many to be unfeminine and even in danger of damaging their reproductive systems

Particularly in the South, women were viewed as naturally weak and dependent and desperately in need of protection by men. A man's duty was to protect and provide for the women In Ins life and in exchange, women were expected to be obedient to men. A wife's role was to raise children and manage the home. Women who defied men or otherwise resisted their passive role In society were considered unfeminine and were ostracized. A perfect example of tins is depicted In *Gone with the Wind* when Scarlett is labeled unladylike and is subsequently shunned by Atlanta society for disobeying her husband's wishes and buying and operating her own lumber mill. This contrasts greatly With the respectable and feminine home-based pie-baking business Mrs Merriwether starts, especially since her father and son-in-law assist with the business. Similarly, Ellen O'Hara's skillful management of Tara is acceptable because It is an extension of home

By 1936, when Mitchell wrote *Gone with the Wind*, the Women's Movement had improved some aspects of women's Jives, but not all. Many colleges and universities opened their doors to women, though relatively few women enrolled, mainly because society still considered a man's education more important. Some women worked outside the home, but It was not the norm. A major achievement of the Women's Movement had been the Women's Suffrage Amendment. Introduced in 1878, it had finally passed in 1919, and by 1920 it was ratified into law as the 19th Amendment. However, by the 1930s the Women's Movement had fallen into a period of relative inactivity. With the vote granted, many women assumed the need for a Women's Movement had ceased to be important. Many inequalities still existed, but interest in women's rights would not rise again until the 1960s.

Critical Overview

Upon its publication in 1936, *Gone with the Wind* became an immediate best-seller. Before it even hit the bookstores, it was named as a Book of the Month main selection. In six months it sold a record-breaking one million copies and was well on its way to becoming the best-selling novel in history. To date it has outsold every other book except the Bible. The fervor it created extended to Mitchell herself, who quickly found that she could not leave home without fans begging her for autographs. Newspaper publishers and magazine editors offered her amazing sums for anything she would care to write for them. Hundreds of fan letters arrived at her home each day and her phone rang off the hook. *Gone with the Wind* was a national phenomenon.

Early reviews of the work spanned a wide range of opinions, but most were favorable. Many critics praised Mitchell for her attention to historical detail, her vivid characterization, and ear for dialogue. She was lauded as a gifted storyteller who held her readers spellbound. Edwin Granberry of the *New York Sun* compared her talent to that of the great Russian and English panoramic novelists, a comparison that other reviewers would draw as well. Herschell Brickell of the *New York Post* declared it the best novel written about the Civil War and its aftermath; furthermore, he predicted that *Gone with the Wind* would find a permanent place in American literature. In contrast, other critics dismissed the book as trite, overly sentimental, and full of clichés. Bernard DeVoto of the *Saturday Review of Literature* fell into this camp, deriding *Gone with the Wind* for its cheap sentiments, which he felt falsified true experience. In addition, there were reviewers who found aspects of the novel morally offensive. As Anne Edwards notes in her book, *Road to Tara: The Life of Margaret Mitchell*, some reviewers criticized *Gone with the Wind* for its "condescending portrait of blacks, the glorification of plantation life, and its lack of a political and social point of view."

In 1937, *Gone with the Wind* was honored twice: first with the Pulitzer Prize for fiction, and second with the annual prize for best fiction from the American Bookseller's Association. Following the release of the film in 1939, critical interest in the book virtually ended. Academics have since speculated that because *Gone with the Wind* was stylistically at odds with the modern literature published at the time and didn't fit easily into any school of literature, it was difficult for critics to assess. In addition, the novel's marketplace success and subsequent status as a pop culture icon has always been problematic, eclipsing everything else about the book for many critics. A resurgence of interest in the book occurred in the 1970s, but little consensus on its literary merit has been reached and criticism on it is still limited.

Mitchell herself admitted to being mystified by the book's mass appeal. Articles discussing the book's popularity appeared with some regularity in newspapers and magazines for a few years. Although several theories were debated, many reviewers attributed the book's success to the fact that Americans living through the Great Depression could readily identify with Scarlett's trials as she overcomes poverty and rebuilds her life in the Reconstruction South. But that seems only part of the book's allure, which continues to sell 250,000 paperback copies in the United States each year.

As southern writer Pat Conroy expressed in his preface to the 60th anniversary edition of *Gone with the Wind*: "[The novel] works because it possesses the inexpressible magic where the art of pure storytelling rises above its ancient use and succeeds in explaining to a whole nation how it came to be this way. There has never been a reader or a writer who could figure out why this happens only to very few books ... [*Gone with the Wind*] allows you to lose yourself in the glorious pleasure of reading itself, when all five senses ignite in the sheer happiness of narrative."

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2
- Critical Essay #3



Critical Essay #1

*McIntosh-Byrd is a doctoral candidate at the University of Pennsylvania. In the following essay, she analyzes Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* as an anti-Civil War novel at odds with its wider cultural interpretation.*

Gone with the Wind has sold an average of 500,000 copies each year since its publication in 1936. More Americans learn about the Civil War from Mitchell's novel than from any other single author, and even more Americans know the book through the movie that followed three years after its publication. David O. Selznick's 1939 film is still the most viewed movie in the history of cinema. *Gone with the Wind* holds an indelible place in U.S. culture as the great romanticization of the last days of the antebellum South.

Within this cultural enshrinement, Scarlett's character is collapsed into a broader understanding of Southern culture, becoming both metaphor and metonym of the South itself—the iconographic representation of Southern womanhood for every generation of girls born after 1939. Yet in striking ways, Mitchell's portrait interrogates both historical and contemporary mythologies of the war. Is Scarlett the ideal Southern Belle? Is the antebellum world the textual Ideal? Are the Tarleton twins and Ashley the idealized and eulogized Southern Gentlemen whose passage is being inhumed? The answers to these three questions are no—a suggestion made consistently and thoroughly throughout Mitchell's novel. In the final analysis, the glorious South of *Gone with the Wind* is as much and as little "authentic" as Vivien Leigh's Scarlett—a British actress of the 1930s portraying an American woman in the nineteenth century. Its status as a historical novel and its conscious reworking of history for contemporary ends elevates textual theatricality to its most opaque level. *Gone with the Wind* is acting a part, and in doing so it forces critical reevaluations of the script it is following.

From the first line, it is clear that *Gone with the Wind* is writing against expectations its heroine is, "not beautiful, but men seldom realized it." Scarlett O'Hara is not an archetypal romance heroine or Southern belle, and the South that she represents is as paradoxically unattractive yet beguiling as she is. That Scarlett and the South are one and the same entity is an aspect of the novel that has been noted on many occasions. From the time

of publication, reviewers and critics have characterized Scarlett as the personification of the acquisitive, mercantile zeitgeist of the New South, and she is clearly identified throughout the novel with Atlanta—that zeitgeist's representative city. At the same time, Scarlett embodies the culmination of the Old—the logical evolution, rather than transformation, of Antebellum into Reconstruction South. Scarlett passes from sanctioned performative gender play—a Judith Butler-esque negotiation of masquerading femininity and gender—to unmasked businesswoman and schemer. This passage perfectly mirrors the transition of the grandiose antebellum South to the capitalist Reconstruction era: a parallel that reveals the fragile



and paradoxical artifice of both Southern womanhood and Southern gentility. Like Selznick's famous torching of the old Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) sets to create the scene in which Atlanta burns, Scarlett's story tracks the conflagration of false fronts, and *tromp l'oeil*.

From the beginning of the text, Scarlett is both constrained by and in rebellion against the conventions of her society. As a child she can ride and climb as well as her male contemporaries; as a young woman she has become a "proper" young lady, trained to perform by her mother and her Mammy. Her performance is always just that—a self-consciously artificial masque embodying "outward Signs" and betokening no "inner grace" Scarlett must "clothe" herself in femininity in the way that she literally clothes herself—a physical and mental distortion of natural form designed to create the illusion of an ideal. In doing so, her character calls into question not just the performative aspect of femininity, but also the performative aspects of a culture that demands such ritualistic selfpresentation in order to function.

Scarlett's excellence at pretending to be feminine is the central paradox of the first section of *Gone with the Wind*. On the one hand, she is an ideal Southern young lady because she behaves exactly as the ideal is required to behave. On the other hand, it is her ability to scheme and "calculate" both literally and metaphorically—that allows her to act this ideal. In other words, the very aspects of Scarlett's character that enable her to be "ideal" are precisely those attributes that are to be avoided. To "catch" her man she must be duplicitous; to "snare" a good marriage she must be "natural" and "unaffected." This series of irreconcilable paradoxes creates the sixteen-year-old heroine of the opening scenes, a girl who has learned to use the attributes of womanhood to further her "predatory" designs on men. Tellingly, mathematics is the only subject in which Scarlett has ever excelled—"calculating."

Scarlett's reaction to this endlessly self-generating cultural demand for calculated performance is not a positive one. It frustrates her, and over the course of the novel she becomes less and less willing to enact the required facades. Fundamentally, such facades are shown to be not only foolish, but also actively harmful. As her Mammy scolds her into remembering, in order to catch her man Scarlett must become completely "unnatural"—denying her actual hunger in the interests of seeming like a delicate young lady. In the complex exchange culture of Southern gender, Scarlett must deny her

physical reality in order to create a consciously false, quasi-Platonic Ideal of reality. The effort is exhausting and, more importantly, tends to the inevitable collapse of the Ideal. "Reality" cannot be denied. As Scarlett says, "I'm tired of everlastingly being unnatural and never doing anything I want to do." In an ironic foreshadowing of later events, this scene looks forward to the devastated Tara in which food is perilously scarce. Scarlett, like her culture, will experience a shift from feigned appetite to actual famine—from performance to reality—in one horribly ironic sequence. Reconstruction will depend on subduing all efforts to the goal of meeting the needs of bodies that had always been denied, ignored, and disguised. When Scarlett vows she'll "never go hungry again," the Southern lady disappears forever



Scarlett's tendency to break the fourth wall of femininity shifts in meaning as the novel progresses. As the war forces a slow but total collapse of the old culture, so Scarlett's breaches of ritual become more and more essential to the survival of those around her. Melanie, the novel's true "ideal" lady, is able to easily shift her private self-sacrifice to a public self-sacrifice for the sacred Confederacy. While there is no real danger-and while the possibility of defeat is still safely in the North the cultural goals that she embodies remain intact Scarlett, who becomes a nurse simply because, "she didn't know how to get out of it," is the subject of outrage, preoccupied with her own aims and indifferent to the demands of Atlanta culture. The disintegration of the Confederacy and the arrival of war in Atlanta overturn the meaning of both the conventions she has ignored and the characteristics she refuses to hide. As Dr. Meade announces, "This is wartime. We can't think of the proprieties now."

The currency has changed, and Melanie's "value" is debased entirely. Like the Confederate bonds in which the families have invested, old and privileged behaviors have no exchange value or functional meaning anymore. Significantly, Melanie is struggling in labor while Atlanta burns and Scarlett searches for help. Like her culture, she is unable to "reproduce" naturally-transmuting from a cherished ideal of weakness to a sickly liability during the course of the fire. The product of the cousin-marrying-cousin union of Ashley and Melanie, lady and gentleman par excellence, is unable to come into the world Without the New South, Scarlett, who delivers the baby herself. From this point onwards, the traits that Ellen and Mammy have struggled to repress in Scarlett become the basis for her survival, and for the salvation of those who surround her. Melanie's world is too weak to survive into another generation without Scarlett, and reliance on Scarlett means accepting what Scarlett stands for, which in turn means accepting self-destruction. As Ashley says, it's the *Gotterdammerung*-the twilight of the Gods-below the Mason-Dixon line.

The notion that Scarlett represents a critique of both Southern womanhood *and* manhood is suggested throughout *Gone with the Wind*. The gradual emergence of performative masculine gender behavior in Scarlett acts as a significant indicator of her character progression, from the little girl who was good at calculations, to the fully grown businesswoman who is better at calculating and dealing than the men who surround her. At the beginning of the novel, Scarlett is still engaged in the enactment of gender performance, and wishes she "was a man." While the Confederate cause was still glorious and while her culture remained ideal, Scarlett's yearning to psychically "cross-dress" is no more than appropriate cultural behavior-an extension of the ritualistic performance of femininity into which she is forced. By the end of the war she has begun to behave like a "real" man: now "her reactions were all masculine," and she "talked and acted like a man." Becoming almost a "garçon manqué," she wins a reputation for bravery among the lads of Atlanta to the extent that Aunt Pitty and Melanie are willing to stay without a man if Scarlett is there. When Atlanta burns, Scarlett's role shifts between various masculine states, allowing her to become first a general in retreat, and then Tara's patriarch. The "real" patriarch is mad-both literally and metaphorically-and Scarlett becomes the family's provider and protector.



Scarlett's behavior throughout the Reconstruction period acts as a greater and greater critique of Southern gender assumptions than had her previous violations of convention. Having been the gallant savior of both Melanie and her surviving family, Scarlett now becomes a businesswoman. In the representation of this transformation lies a powerful reversal of entrenched masculine honor. First and foremost, Scarlett's "masculinity" shows itself to be based in acquisitiveness. She dedicates herself to amassing wealth at any human cost, orchestrating her marriages and trampling the affections of those around her to that end. Human relationships are reduced to financial transactions and calculations as Scarlett steals her sister's only beau, Frank Kennedy, for his money, offers her body to Rhett in exchange for money, and uses exploited convict labor to increase her profits. Laying bare the economic underpinnings of the old order, Scarlett Justifies her actions with the comment: "You can't be a lady without money." Both the genteel femininity and protective masculinity of the antebellum South rested on assumptions of wealth and privilege. By laying these connections bare, Scarlett destroys their sum product. The New South that Scarlett represents is merely the Old South with its masque removed.

The idealized young gentlemen of the South-the Ashleys-have disappeared to battle, "gone with the wind" of "flamboyant patriotism" that made the war possible. By the novel's conclusion their glory has been debased and deflated, until they are, as Scarlett realizes, just "children." The benevolent white patriarchs are equally destroyed, reduced-like Gerald O'Hara-to madness and despair. Again, this is not a true transformation, but a breach of the facade-a revelation of reality. As the narrator says, the Old South was a "happy feminine conspiracy" Privilege rested' with men, but power lay in the unspoken "conspiracy" of white Southern women. At Tara in the days before the war, "only one voice was obeyed on the plantation"-Ellen O'Hara's. The reality of gender and power remained hidden from Gerald, since "everyone from Ellen down to the stupidest field hand was in a tacit and kindly conspiracy to keep him believing his word was law." Gerald retains the performative aspects of masculine authority by tacitly accepting the condescension of his family and his slaves Scarlett's masculinity and her naked ambition, calculation, and power shatter the Illusion of the old patriarchy forever Too "masculine" to be "feminine," and too "feminine" to be "masculine," Scarlett not only pulls down the structure of gender expectations and behavior, but also destroys the culture of which it was a product. The Scarlett who emerges from the war is the avatar of *de-* and *Re* construction.

Source: Tabitha McIntosh-Byrd, in an essay for *Novels for Students*, Gale, 2000



Critical Essay #2

In the essay below, Millichap provides a critical overview of Mitchell's novel and the circumstances around its writing and publication, taking special note of the elements that make the work especially appealing to young adults

Although Margaret Mitchell did not consider herself a writer for young adults, her single masterpiece, *Gone with the Wind*, and its blockbuster film version have been perennial favorites of American teenagers, to the point that both are often included in high school and college curriculums. The increased interest of recent years following the fiftieth anniversaries of both the novel (1986) and the film (1989), as well as the publication of an authorized sequel (1992) will surely extend the popularity of *Gone with the Wind* into the next century. This popular phenomenon proves most interesting as Mitchell's masterwork seems a nineteenth-century book in subject, theme, and style--a twentieth-century reincarnation of the Victorian "triple-decker" romance. Thus the book's remarkable popularity is a combination of tradition and change much like the narrative it relates. In critical terms, it is possible to read *Gone with the Wind* as a female development novel. At the novel's opening in 1861, Scarlett O'Hara is a sixteen-year-old coquette; when it concludes in 1873 she is a twenty-eight-year-old woman. In the twelve-year span of the novel, she experiences Secession, Civil War, and Reconstruction, as well as romance, love, marriage, and motherhood. Scarlett lives through the adolescent trauma of American culture, which is matched by a traumatic personal history as much or more tumultuous. Energized by her own life, Mitchell created one of the most arresting tales of troubled adolescence in

American literature and in so doing created a novel which will continue to captivate teenagers and fascinate their teachers well into the next century.

For younger readers, Scarlett O'Hara's development from teenaged girl to mature woman proves as fascinating now as it did when the book was first published in 1936 or when the movie first appeared in 1939. The particular, indeed peculiar energy of the story proceeds from Mitchell's own girlhood, adolescence, and young adult life. During these years she heard the family legends of the Civil War era into which she projected her own development toward womanhood. The novel combines Mitchell's family and personal romances with historical facts to create powerful and popular fiction.

The popular image of Mitchell was as a Southern matron who turned to writing as her contemporaries might cultivate bridge, golf, or gardening. Although descended from old Georgia families and raised in comfortable circumstances, the future author was no simple Southern belle. Her mother's feminist leanings clashed with her father's conservatism, and a young Mitchell became a somewhat willful, rebellious tomboy, given to flights of imaginative fancy and a series of serious, debilitating accidents and illnesses. After the death of her first beloved on the Western Front and of her mother in the influenza epidemic, Mitchell became "a flapper," both living the wild times of the Jazz Age and writing about them in nonfiction. Her first marriage was a disaster, climaxed by spousal rape and scandalous divorce, while her second marriage mirrored



her dependent, and sometimes stressful relationships with her father and brother. The writer's social, psychological, and sexual ambiguities found expression in her greatest creation, Scarlett O'Hara, while other people in her life provided models for other characters in *Gone with the Wind*.

The critical history of *Gone with the Wind* is contradictory, as might be expected from the writer's conflicted biography. The reaction of reviewers and of general readers was quite positive in 1936, for no one would deny that the novel was a great "read." Even the initial response of the literary community seemed laudatory. Comparisons were made with the great novelists and novels of the nineteenth century, such as [William Makepeace] Thackeray and *Vanity Fair*, [Leo] Tolstoy and *Anna Karenina*, and [Gustave] Flaubert and *Madame Bovary*. In terms of memorable characters, sweeping action, colorful settings, and grand themes the novel was a success. At the same time, qualifying statements about style, sentiment, racism, and melodrama raised legitimate questions about the book's literary status.

Unfortunately, the novel's existence as a cultural artifact subsumed its identity as a literary text and the immense power and popularity of the film version only complicated the situation. Book and film were conflated into a phenomenon of American and later international popular culture. Thus criticism was arrested at the levels of basic appreciation, often in the Opposite poles of love and/or hate, and evaluation, again often in bipolar terms of praise and/or scorn. On the popular level the novel was lauded and in the literary world it was defamed.

This critical neglect continued well into the 1960s when reconsiderations of American culture and society elicited new readings of classic texts. Mitchell and her novel were seen as important symbols of American cultural forces. A serious biography in 1965 sparked reconsideration simply by the assumption of Mitchell's importance as a writer. Other reevaluations followed which asserted the literary quality of the work, notably in feminist terms. The critical neglect of the novel thus was explained in terms of the largely male critical establishment, and Mitchell became the subject of articles and dissertations in the 1970s. Finally, in the 1980s, the half-century anniversaries of both novel and film provided new perspectives for critical focus in a number of important critical works, including a definitive biography.

Source: Joseph R Millichap, "Margaret Mitchell" Overview," in *Twentieth-Century*.



Critical Essay #3

Cowley has made several valuable contributions to contemporary letters with his editions of Important American authors (Nathaniel Hawthorne, Walt Whitman, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, F Scott Fitzgerald), his writings as a literary critic for The New Republic, and, above all, for his chronicles and criticism of modern American literature. Cowley's literary criticism does not attempt a systematic philosophical view of life and art, nor is it representative of a neatly defined school of critical thought, but rather focuses on works-particularly those of "lost generation" writers-that he feels his personal experience has qualified him to explicate and that he considers worthy of public appreciation. The critical approach Cowley follows is undogmatic and is characterized by a willingness to view a work from whatever perspective---social, historical, aesthetic-that the work itself seems to demand for its illumination.

Gone with the Wind is an encyclopedia of the plantation legend. Other novelists by the hundreds have helped to shape this legend, but each of them has presented only part of it. Miss Mitchell repeats it as a whole, with all its episodes and all its characters and all its stage settings-the big white-columned house sleeping under its trees among the cotton fields, the band of faithful retainers, including two that quaintly resemble Aunt Jemima and Old Black Joe; the white-haired mass bathing in mint juleps; the heroine with her seventeen-inch waist and the high-spirited twins who came courting her in the magnolia-colored moonlight, With the darkies singing under the hill-then the War between the States, sir, and the twins riding off on their fiery chargers, and the lovely ladies staying behind to nurse the wounded, and Sherman's march (now the damyankees are looting the mansion and one of them threatens to violate its high-bred mistress, but she clutches the rusty trigger of an old horse pistol and it goes off bang in his ugly face)then the black days of Reconstruction, the callousness of the Carpetbaggers, the scalawaggishness of the Scalawags, the knightliness of the Ku Klux Klansmen, who frighten Negroes away from the polls, thus making Georgia safe for democracy and virtuous womanhood and Our Gene Talmadge-it is all here, every last bale of cotton and bushel of moonlight, every last full measure of Southern female devotion working its lilywhite fingers uncomplainingly to the lilywhite bone.

But even though the legend is false in part and silly in part and vicious in its general effect on Southern life today, still it retains its appeal to fundamental emotions. Miss Mitchell lends new strength to the legend by telling it as if it had never been told before, and also by mixing a good share of realism with the romance. She writes with a splendid recklessness, blundering into big scenes that a more experienced novelist would hesitate to handle for fear of being compared unfavorably with Dickens or Dostoevsky. Miss Mitchell is afraid of no comparison and no emotion-she makes us weep at a deathbed (and really weep), exult at a sudden rescue and grit our teeth at the crimes of our relatives the damyankees. I would never, never say that she has written a great novel, but in the midst of triteness and sentimentality her book has a simple-minded courage that suggests the great novelists of the past. No wonder it is going like the wind.

Source: Malcolm Cowley, "Going with the Wind," in *The New Republic*, Vol LXXXVIII, No. 1137, September 16, 1936, pp 161-62



Topics for Further Study

Research the New Deal programs implemented during the Depression era and compare them to programs initiated in the South during the Reconstruction period.

Investigate the effect that Northern Carpetbaggers and Southern Scalawags had on Georgian politics and culture.

Compare Mitchell's portrayal of slave life with slave narratives and other historical accounts of slavery. Which aspects of Mitchell's depiction of slave life on a plantation are realistic? Which are not?

Trace the development and activities of the Ku Klux Klan from their formation to the present day.

Imagine you could host a talk show with some of the characters from *Gone with the Wind*. One topic could be: Can Scarlett get Rhett back and can they salvage their relationship? Who would side with Scarlett? Rhett? Why? Think of two more topics and write three different episodes of the talk show.



Compare and Contrast

1870s: The only proper occupation for women is wife and mother. Only dire financial circumstances force women to work outside the home, and almost none own their own businesses

1930s: While it has become more acceptable for women to work, it is definitely not the norm, only 22 percent of women work outside the house and few women own businesses independent of their husbands.

Today: Nearly 60 percent of women are now employed outside the home and 37 percent of all U.S. businesses are owned by women.

1870s: Although the 14th Amendment guarantees the full citizenship of African Americans, including the right to vote, many Southern whites are appalled by this idea and begin terrorizing or murdering African Americans for exercising their right to vote.

1930s: In the South, many African Americans are prevented from voting by educational tests they must pass or the poll taxes laws, which require them to pay a tax in order to vote.

Today: The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s abolished many discriminatory voting practices in the South, and now no legal barriers exist to prevent African Americans from voting.

1870s: Many small farmers and plantation owners lose their land because they can't pay the new taxes; Reconstruction programs are implemented to stimulate the economy and create jobs by offering financial aid to various industries.

1930s: Unemployment rates climb to 25 percent by the end of the decade; New Deal programs create employment for people to work on national projects such as highway construction and conservation.

Today: Unemployment hovers around 5 percent, the United States enjoys a period of tremendous economic growth, and national and state governments push to drastically limit welfare programs.

1870s: A large majority of the population makes its living by farming; in the South the entire economy is based on agriculture, but is beginning to undergo the transformation to a more industrialized economy.

1930s Only 21 percent of the population works in agriculture; the Depression forces many to seek employment through Federal programs.

Today: Now in the Information Age, less than 3 percent of the population makes its living by farming.

What Do I Read Next?

Lay My Burden Down, edited by B. A. Botkin (1945), is a collection of interviews with former slaves, recorded and transcribed by the Federal Writers' Project. Men and women describe their experiences as slaves.

A Stillness at Appomatox is Bruce Catton's 1953 history of the Civil War. The final book of his three-volume *Army of the Potomac* historical series, it won a Pulitzer Prize.

The Battle-Ground, by Ellen Glasgow (1902), focuses on two aristocratic families who live on adjoining Virginia plantations during the Civil War era.

James McPherson's *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (1982) traces Civil War events and also examines relevant pre- and postwar issues and activities.

Scarlett, Alexandra Ripley's 1991 sequel to *Gone with the Wind*, continues the story of Scarlett and Rhett.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's classic novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), chronicles the mistreatment of a slave named Uncle Tom at the hands of his cruel master, Simon Legree. Stowe wrote the novel, in part, to further the abolitionist cause.



Further Study

Stephen Vincent Benet, "Georgia Marches Through," *Saturday Review*, July 4, 1936, p. 5.

An early review praising the novel's realism and readability

James Boatwright, "Tobn' de Weery Load," *New Republic*, September 1, 1973, pp 29-32.

A review citing moral and political objections to *Gone with the Wind*.

Fini Farr, *Margaret Mitchell of Atlanta*, Morrow, 1965.

The first definitive biography written on Margaret Mitchell

Dawon Gaillard, "Gone with the Wind as 'Bildungsroman' or Why Did Rhett Butler Really Leave Scarlett O'Hara?," *Georgia Review*, Spring, 1974, pp 9-28

Gaillard's essay discusses the relationship between gender and culture and argues that Mitchell is criticizing the Southern code of chivalry in *Gone With the Wind*.

Anne G. Jones, "Tomorrow Is Another Day" *The Woman Writer in the South, 1859-1936*, Louisiana State University Press, 1981

Jones's book places Mitchell in the context of a long line of Southern women Writers who rebelled against Southern culture and a woman's place within it

Richard Harwell, *Margaret Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind" Letters, 1936-1949*, Macmillan, 1976.

A collection of the letters Mitchell wrote in response to the fan mail she received.

Darden Ashbury Pyron, *Recasting' Gone with the Wind in American Culture*, University Presses of Florida, 1983.

A collection of critical essays, this book traces critical analysis of *Gone with the Wind* from its publication to the present.

Southern Daughter. The Life of Margaret Mitchell, Oxford University Press, 1991.

An in-depth biography that also includes some critical analysis of *Gone with the Wind*.

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Pat Conroy, Preface of Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*, Macmillan, 1996.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's □For Students□ Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels



frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel; and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of "classic" novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members—educational professionals—helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized



Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- **Introduction:** a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- **Author Biography:** this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- **Plot Summary:** a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- **Characters:** an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed—for instance, the narrator in *Invisible Man*—the character is listed as "The Narrator" and alphabetized as "Narrator." If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name "Jean Louise Finch" would head the listing for the narrator of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname "Scout Finch."
- **Themes:** a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- **Style:** this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- **Historical Context:** This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- **Critical Overview:** this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- **Criticism:** an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).



- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an "at-a-glance" comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes "The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature," a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.



Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

□Night.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the □Criticism□ subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on □Winesburg, Ohio.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. □Margaret Atwood's □The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,□ Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. □Richard Wright: □Wearing the Mask,□ in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

The editor of Novels for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

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