CHAPTER 3

THE STRUGGLING SURVIVORS

William Faulkner presents diverse, mysterious, and kaleidoscopic patterns of human nature in his fiction. He exposes the dark, unexplored, and hidden corners of human psyche which became more complex due to the traumatic experiences of two World Wars. For survival in post-war world, the struggling man sacrificed all eternal values like compassion, love, pity, and fraternity. Simultaneously, the expansion of industrialization made people more materialistic as T. S. Eliot opines, “the more highly industrialized the country, the more easily a materialistic philosophy will flourish in it, and the more deadly that philosophy will be…” (53).

During this changing scenario the most affected persons belonged to the generation that was brought up in the lap of old traditional culture replete with morality and ethics. Now in their middle age they were witnessing the loss of values, and increasing hedonism among their young children. Consequently, in such environment they became confused, perplexed, and depressed. Women belonging to this generation are called ‘Struggling Survivors’ in the present endeavour. Faulkner is a rare novelist who has made word-pictures of these struggling survivors in such a skilled manner that they look like real human beings who have different ideals, likes, dislikes, and weaknesses. His exquisite presentation of their agonies, sufferings, insecurities, inertia, and complexes proves that he had the profound knowledge of a woman’s heart. He also shows that these women are fraught with multi-faceted crisis as every familiar thing is changing in this transition period. Moreover, they have to witness the denigration of their social, religious, and cultural theories in helpless manner. These perplexed women adopt very funny ways to survive in this chaotic world. To overcome their loneliness either they adopt false show-off of morality or rear misconceptions about themselves. Some of them try to hide their insecurities in the garb of artificial behaviour while others seek fulfillment in extra-marital relations. But ironically their blind materialistic approach, selfish attitude, and negation of family obligations only enhance their loneliness, depression, and dissatisfaction. Among this immense panorama of futility and anarchy these struggling survivors are
proved weak human beings who are unable to face the hazards of life. In their miserable and pitiable existence they do not serve as the pivot of their families rather they represent those destructive forces which annihilate the entire family.

Mrs. Compson (Caroline Bascomb) in *The Sound and the Fury* is shown as the mother of three sons: Quentin, Benjy, Jason, and a daughter: Caddy. She is a dependent hypochondriac who emotionally blackmails the whole family by saying, “I know I’m nothing but a burden to you”… ‘But I’ll be gone soon. Then you’ll be rid of my bothering’ ” (47). Most of the time she lies in her bed with a folded cloth tied on her head. Even after a span of twenty eight years she is shown, repeating the same dialogue to Dilsey on April 7, 1928 who is busy in taking care of Benjy and can not respond to her call. At this she feels neglected, and starts whimpering like a spoiled child, “I know, I know”… ‘I’ll be gone soon and you and Jason will both get along better’ ” (45-46). Thus, in her whole life she has done nothing except grumbling and complaining about one thing or another. She ignores her motherly obligations as she is always absorbed in taking care of her own health at the cost of everything. She blames Caddy that she has spoiled Benjamin as Damuddy spoiled Jason, and she is the person who has to pay for it. But reality is contrary to her claim as she is unable to face even a slightest inconvenience. She always has a phobia of her illness so her brother, Maury, takes advantage of her obsession. In the projection of brother-sister relationship, Faulkner has highlighted a typical weakness in sisters through the example of Mrs. Compson. She is so much attached to her brother that she names her son after him, and when the child is proved an idiot she immediately changes his name though it is considered a bad omen. Basically Maury is a shirker, reckless, and irresponsible man, but Mrs. Compson is blind to all his shortcomings. He lives in Compson’s house and flirts with a neighbour, Mrs. Petterson. He asks Caddy to deliver his love letters secretly. One day he is caught red-handed by Mr. Petterson, and is beaten badly. In this incident his eyes and mouth are swollen yet he pompously talks about shooting Mr. Petterson. When Mr. Compson laughs at his behaviour, Mrs. Compson starts crying, and says, “If you begrudge Maury your food, why aren’t you a man enough to say to his face. To ridicule him before the children behind his
back’… ‘My people are every bit as well born as yours. Just because Maury’s health is bad’ ” (32).

Due to the pride of belonging to a high class family she hates the habit of calling people by their nicknames. She calls her children with full names such as Caddy-Candace and Benjy-Benjamin. She always remains in bed so her idiot son compares her with dead Damuddy. This comparison between Damuddy and Mrs. Compson indicates her dead presence. She calls herself a burden which is true. Dilsey has to take care of her as if she is a kid. She always complains about headache but in reality she is a headache for the whole family with her meaningless grumbling. Due to her negligence her family suffers a lot. In contrast to others her son-in-law, Herbert, pampers her a lot by saying that she looks younger than Caddy as she has rosy cheeks like a girl. But Quentin has a different picture of her mother in his mind. He remembers her mother’s face as “A face reproachful tearful an odour of camphor and of tears a voice weeping steadily…” (73).

Faulkner has thrown light on husband-wife relationship also. Mrs. Compson always says, that keeping aside her pride she has married a man who considers himself superior to her. Disharmony in their relationship adversely affects the life of the children. She is such a clever lady that under the garb of sickness she neglects all her maternal duties, and obligations. Consequently, children are more attached to Mr. Compson. She is such a diplomat that to hide her incapability she blames Mr. Compson, and says,“ ‘How can I control any of them when you have always taught them to have no respect for me ...’ ” (73).

Jason is Mrs. Compson’s favourite child and when he gets a proposal to join Herbert’s bank she becomes extremely happy. She writes to Quentin that Jason will become a very good banker as he is more practical due to Bascomb traits. Many times she complains that she has to pay for the sins of Mr. Compson and her own sins along with the sins of mighty ancestors of the Compson family. She quarrels with her husband because he believes that Jason can do any wrong as he is more Bascomb than Compson. She taunts her husband that she is considered unfortunate because she is a Bascomb, but she thinks that she is lucky because she has been taught that “there is no
halfway ground that a woman is either a lady or not…” (70). She tells him that Caddy is very secretive so she has put Jason on spying:

   it’s for your sake to protect you but who can fight against bad blood you won’t let me try we are to sit back with our hands folded while she not only drags your name in the dirt but corrupts the very air your children breathe.… (79)

At this juncture while Caddy has gone astray and is having affair with a commoner, she wants to go away somewhere with Jason. She asks Mr. Compson to keep Quentin, Caddy, and Benjy because she now feels that they are not her flesh and blood. She will take Jason and pray for him so that he may escape this curse. Thus, she shakes off every motherly responsibility. She blames her husband and his blood for Caddy’s faults. Gradually, Jason also gets fed up with her emotional blackmailing so very rudely he says, that she has been repeating her dialogues “ for thirty years. Even Ben ought to know it now” (140). Mrs. Compson always grumbles that she has been given an idiot child, Benjamin, as a punishment. She whines that her irresponsible daughter has no regard for her while she has always dreamed, planned, and sacrificed for her. In reality, Caddy plays the role of a loving, affectionate, and caring mother. Whenever Mrs. Compson curses Benjy, and calls him ‘my poor baby’, Caddy saves him. Thus, Mrs. Compson is a total failure as a mother because she does not realise that “The morality of motherhood demands a huge element of sacrifice” (Srinath 37). She is unable to produce healthy environment which is necessary for the harmonious development of children. In this connection Millgate comments, “Parents- Mr. Compson, sententious and ineffectual, and Mrs. Compson, a whining hypochondriac- provide a domestic environment which combines readily with the effects of heredity to drive the children along their terrible paths” (27). When Caddy is divorced, Mrs. Compson refuses to give shelter to her. By doing this she wants to project before the world that she is a woman of principles while in reality she is a merciless woman, irresponsible mother, and hopeless individual. Through her example, the novelist has shown the negative effect of a mother. In the case of Caddy’s daughter, Mrs. Compson asks Jason to control her, “ ‘When people act like niggers, no matter who they are the only thing to do is treat them like a nigger’ ”
(140). She has the fear of society so she requests Jason to do something otherwise people will think that she has permitted Miss Quentin to stay out of school. She is a big diplomat also. Firstly she cries a lot and urges Jason to treat Miss Quentin like a nigger, and when Jason agrees she says, “‘Don’t lose your temper… she’s just a child, remember’ ” (141).

Mrs. Compson calls herself a true Christian but in reality her behaviour is opposite to the preaching of Christ. She does not love even her own children except Jason. But irony lies in the situation that her beloved son loves only money for which he cheats even his mother, sister, and his niece. He hides Caddy’s original cheques, and presents fake cheques before his mother which are torn by her in anger because she does not want to accept sinful money from Caddy. Poetic-justice is evident in the case of Mrs. Compson as she is robbed by her darling son due to her weak eyesight. When ultimately she is ready to accept the money by keeping aside her pride, clever Jason stops her from doing so because it will expose his deceit. He promises her that he has been managing for so long and in future also he will manage somehow. Mrs. Compson feels proud of her son and says, “‘we Bascombs need nobody’s charity’ ” (169). After that she burns the cheques saying, “‘Let me never see the day when my children will have to accept that the wages of sin’… ‘I’d rather see even you dead in your coffin’ ” (170).

While a hypochondriac mother is always taking refuse in her camphor soaked handkerchief and shirking from her family duties and obligations. Dilsey is there to fulfill the needs and demands of everyone. In this novel Faulkner has highlighted cruelty of a self-centered mother. Poor Caddy is not allowed to enter the house to see her infant daughter. Consequently, she becomes the victim of Jason’s heartless blackmailing. In this connection, Williams opines, “In The Sound and the Fury the terribleness of the mother was explained in social terms” (111). While the mother exploits the whole family, Jason exploits his mother. Quentin’s monologue also highlights the negative role of a mother as in depression he cries, “‘My little sister had no. If I could say Mother, Mother’ ” (72). This novel appears like a court case in which first of all the case is presented objectively then the two witnesses give
their own opinions, and in the end Dilsey exposes the weaknesses of Jason and Mrs. Compson.

Mrs. Patricia Maurier’s portrait in Mosquitoes is painted with the colours of satire, paradox, and irony. She was very beautiful, attractive, and sweet in her youth. Painters made her paintings, and her face dominated exhibitions as “she cut quite a figure among the Jeunesse doree of the nineties: …” (268). She fell in love with a young boy who was penniless, but her parents married her to an excessively rich “cold, violent man, graying now…” (270). At the time of marriage she was decked with costly jewels, and after that she led an artificial and mirthless life. Now in the middle age, she tries to kill the feelings of loneliness and depression by keeping herself busy in parties. She hides her real feelings behind the mask of “cold Dresden china mask of hers” (269). She got no child whether due to Mr. Maurier’s old age or her barrenness nobody knows. Mr. Fairchild observes that perhaps Mrs. Maurier is still a virgin and she tries to fill her vacuum by “Fooling with sex, kind of dabbing at it, like a kitten at ball strings she missed something: her body told her so, insisted forced her to try to remedy it and fill the vacuum. But now her body is old” (270).

In the beginning of the novel, Mrs. Maurier is shown as a fashionable rich widow who projects herself as a lover of artistic things. Faulkner laughs at her childish and immature expression. First of all she is seen through the eyes of Talliafero who compares her big size with a ship in full sail. She decorates her big body with valuable jewels, but paradoxically her face always has an expression of childish astonishment. Whenever she speaks she puts accent on the first word of each phrase. She talks in coquettish manner. She chooses the picture of Madonna which has childish expression and a child who has the expression of an old man. Her innermost feelings of loneliness and a child who has the expression of an old man. Her innermost feelings of loneliness find expression whenever she calls herself “a lonely old woman” and “a long lonely road” (21). In front of the people she presents herself as a very busy, devoted, and dedicated woman:

But how is Mr. Gordon? I am so continually occupied with things – unavoidable duties, which my conscience will not permit me to evade (I am very conscientious, you know) … Yes, I really don’t know how I
get anything done; I am always surprised when I find I have a spare moment for my own pleasure. (21)

Thus, she always poses as if she has so much work to do in less time. At Gordon’s studio when she looks at the watch she cries, “‘Heavens above! Seven thirty. We must fly, come, darling’ ” (22). When Mr. Talliaferro tells her that he is engaged that evening she says, “‘Ah, Mr. Talliaferro. It’s a woman, I know’, ‘what a terrible man you are,…’ ” (22). She is curious to know about the life of the artists so she goes to meet Gordon without any prior intimation. She says to her niece that it will be interesting to see how they live. Because of her enormous size like a ship, Faulkner again and again uses the word ‘Sail’ for her walking. When Mrs. Maurier calls Patricia to meet Gordon she feels, “Beneath her aunt’s saccharine modulation was a faint trace of something not so sweet after all” (24). Thus, the point of view of her niece exposes Mrs. Maurier’s artificial behaviour.

Mrs. Maurier always try to project before the people that she is a lover of beauty. To impress others she speaks lofty dialogues and quotations whenever she recalls them. With the word ‘untrammeled’ she remembers, “The untrammeled spirit, freedom like the eagle’s” (27). Again when she is searching for a reason to visit Gordon’s room, she says in confusing manner, “Life’s busy highroad to kneel for a moment at the Master’s feet?” (27). But this time she is shut up by her niece. Invitation to Gordon is also a part of show off because in her society it is a matter of prestige for the fashionable people to have links with artists. Mrs. Maurier insists again and again that they must have a sculptor in their group.

Realization of coming old age leaves her grief-stricken though most of the time she pretends to be a brave and young woman. When Gordon does not accept her invitation for dinner and leave them unceremoniously, she becomes sad. She realizes that due to old age she is unable to sustain her admirers. But the moment she gets in car her spirits are revived again, and in coquettish manner she taps Mr. Talliaferro’s cheeks.

On the first day of their voyage in The Nausikaa at 10 O’clock she wears yachting cap in a formal manner and shows pointless excitement. She always bears an
expression of childish astonishment. The novelist emphasizes that sometimes her
astonishment is sincere also. For example, when she comes to know that Patricia has
invited two unknown persons, she is shocked. She has a weak and sensitive heart.
During the lunch time when she looks at the empty chairs she at once has the brief
dreadful vision “of reporters and headlines, and of floating inert buttocks in some
lonely reach of the lake, that would later wash ashore with that mute inopportune
implacability of the drowned” (56). She wants to have every man under her wing like
Talliaferro while all other males defy her on the first day at lunch time. Mrs. Maurier
does her face saving by saying, “‘you men, you naughty men. I’ll forgive you,
however, this once’” (56). On the lunch table they talk about constipation ignoring
Mrs. Maurier’s objection. She plans to keep them busy in bridge game, but all the
gentlemen except Talliaferro refuse to stay and go away to lie down. Knowing her
domineering nature they feel sorry for Mr. Talliaferro. Mr. Fairchild feels that Mrs.
Maurier has rotten due to excessive money. Mrs. Wiseman also notes that all
gentlemen except Talliaferro and Mark try to avoid her. Just after twelve hours of
voyage she feels tired. When she makes plans for dance she comes to know that all
her guests have gone to bed. All the male members have sympathy for Mr.
Talliaferro, and when anyhow he escapes from Mrs. Maurier's grip and goes to
Fairchild’s room they question, “‘How did you escape? Push her overboard and run?’
” (84).

Mrs. Maurier is shown grief-stricken at the elopement of her niece with her
steward, David, and she moans again and again. When all the guests go for a boat ride
and come back with frightened Jenny, Mrs. Maurier gets shocked to see her condition.
In the EPILOGUE, when Mr. Gorden makes her statue, he penetrates into her psyche
and finds the reason of her silliness:

It was clay, yet damp, and from its dull, dead grayness Mrs. Maurier
looked at them. Her chin, harshly, and her acid jaw muscles with
savage verisimilitude. Her eyes were caverns thumbed with two
motions into the dead familiar astonishment of her face; and yet,
behind them, somewhere within those empty sockets, behind all her
familiar surprise, there was something else – something that exposed her face for the mask it was, and still more, a mask unaware. (266)

Semiticman tells Fairchild, that Mrs. Maurier was forced to marry old Maurier by her people because of his money as “Money. You can’t argue against money: you only protest” (267). Thus, Mrs. Maurier’s life shows man’s blind race for money which leads to loneliness and depression. It is a true fact that when men fall in the abyss of materialism their lives become mechanical, artificial, and gloomy.

Addie is the main character in the novel, As I Lay Dying, which is an interesting novel with its “most dazzling virtuosity” (Howe 182). ‘I’ in the title stands for Addie Bundren who was a school teacher near Frenchman’s Bend. Like Quentin Compson of The Sound and the Fury, Addie is also the victim of her father’s depressive philosophy. Her father used to say, “the reason for living was to get ready to stay dead a long time…” (114). In her girlhood she noticed tension and alienation between her parents which led to hatred for her parents. She was seeking solace so she married Anse whom she saw passing her school three or four times. After having her first son, Cash, she realized that life was terrible and she “learned that words are no good; that words about never fit even when they are trying to say at” (115). With the birth of her second son, Darl, she found that she had been cheated by the words of love. So Addie became vindictive, and to take revenge she got a promise from Anse to take her dead body back to Jefferson for burial near the graves of her parents. Due to coldness in husband-wife relationship Addie was attracted towards the preacher, Whitfield. She was well aware of her sin but she discarded the thoughts like old clothes, “I would think of the sin as garments which we would remove in order to shape and coerce the terrible blood to the forlorn echo of the dead word high in the air” (118). Addie’s terrible blood became calm with the birth of Jewel. Then to do justice with Anse she gave birth to Dewy Dell and Vardaman. The present action in As I Lay Dying begins with the scene in which Addie is lying on her deathbed and people are coming to enquire about her illness. Jewel gets angry and grumbles, “And now than others sitting there like buzzards” (6). According to Dr. Peabody Addie has been dead for ten days, and only her eyes seem to move. Even in the dying condition she has the pride, and wants Dr. Peabody to go out as she does not want his help,
sympathy, and pity. Before death Addie who has been lying in bed for ten days raises herself, and shouts at Cash in strong and harsh voice. Cash shows her the preparation of planks for coffin box. Satisfied with his progress she dies calmly though her eyes are urgently searching for her favourite son, Jewel. Darl has taken him away because he wanted to take revenge from her mother for her special consideration for Jewel. At her death her daughter, Dewey Dell, cries a lot but her husband has no grief rather one moment he enquires from Cash about the coffin and the next moment he asks crying Dewey Dell to "Git up now, and put supper on...We got to keep our strength up, I reckon Doctor Peabody's right hungry, coming all this way. And Cash’s to eat quick and get back to work so he can finish it in time" (32). This is a very strange reaction on the part of a husband on his wife's death. Vardaman, the youngest son of Addie, blames his father that Anse has killed his mother, “You kilt my maw...you kill her” (35). This seven years old boy is unable to understand death. In his innocence he associates his mother with the fish which Anse has caught and given to Dewey Dell for cooking. Darl, the most sensitive son of Addie, thinks, “Addie Bundren will not be. And Jewel is, so Addie Bundren must be” (51). Darl also laughs at the foolishness of his family members when they start the funeral journey after three days. During their journey towards Jefferson they have to face the natural calamities like flood and fire. Inspite of that, Bundrens continue their journey during the day, and when one night they stay at Gillespie's barn there the deteriorating and putrefied dead body of Addie attracts buzzards. Darl considers this funeral journey a stupid action. In order to get rid of it he sets fire to Gillespie's barn, but her brave son, Jewel, saves the coffin. Ultimately Addie reaches to her grave near her kinsmen. Thus, through Addie’s death Faulkner presents the immense panorama of life, and portrays the complexity of human nature and relationships. In order to present these bitter realities he had chosen a very crucial incident in a family i.e. the death of mother. In fact, the title of the novel is based on the words uttered by Addie, and the opening chapter of the novel contains different reactions and responses of the children to mother’s dying condition and death. While Cash with his skill is busy in preparing a coffin for his mother, vindictive Darl takes away Jewel to earn three dollars. The youngest son, Vardaman, is not ready to accept her death, so he makes holes in the coffin so that air should reach to his mother. Dewey Dell cries bitterly while in reality she was eagerly waiting
for her death as she wants to purchase abortion pills during their funeral journey towards Jefferson. Even Cash, the most sincere and faithful son also plans to purchase his carpentry instruments during the journey. Anse’s response is extremely humorous. At the death of Addie he takes a breath of relief that now he can get new teeth. After burial he immediately snatches his daughter’s money, purchases a new set of teeth, and gets a new wife. Thus, here Faulkner exposes the crude selfishness of all the family members behind their masks of grief.

The whole novel revolves round Addie, and her soliloquy with its many revelations shows that disharmony among the children was caused by the dead relationship between their mother and father. Before her marriage, Addie was a school teacher who always tried to impose her will upon the students and left them aware of her existence as she herself claims that she, “Would look forward to the times when they faulted, so I could whip them… and I would think with each blow of the Switch: Now you are aware of me. Now I am something in your secret and selfish life” (114). Her soliloquy reveals the reason behind her marriage with Anse. His empty words of love could not touch her so deadness came in their relationship with the birth of Darl. She thinks: “He did not know he was dead, then. Sometimes I would lie by him in the dark, hearing the land that was now my blood and flesh, and I would think Anse. Why Anse, why are you Anse” (116). This dead relationship drove her towards the preacher, Whitfield. Jewel was born out of this love bond so he became her favourite son. She believed that only Jewel will be her salvation and save her from fire and flood as he is not a selfish Bundren. This proclamation becomes true also.

Faulkner also satirizes the hollowness and futility of the words if they are devoid of action. To Addie the principles of Cora appear to be full of mockery and trickery of words. She feels that the people who have not committed sin and do not know about sin talk more about sin “and that sin and love and fear are just sounds that people who never sinned nor loved nor feared have for what they never had and cannot have until they forget the words” (217). William J. Handy remarks that Addie was convinced “that the purpose in human-existence is to be found in relationship which is experienced rather than those which are sterilized through abstraction” (76). Throughout her life she struggles and fights for essence in life. Wannamaker opines
that Addie is “an individual woman trapped in a patriarchal world that represses her desires and silences her; a woman who longs to find an identity of her own…”.

Throughout her lifetime Addie remained busy in search of a warm alive relationship. Anse represents words without action whereas Cash represents an action in search of words. Here the main objective of the novelist is to show the impact of a mother’s tensions and struggles on the nature and temperament of her children. Cash as a sincere son and admirable carpenter is the picture of Addie’s mental power, patience, and self control. He tolerates the excessive pain and always says, “It don’t bother none…” (132). Darl, an unwanted child, is unable to face the world. The burden of life is too much for him that he loses self control and reaches to asylum. Jewel as a fruit of her passionate love with the preacher is the most active, sacrificing, courageous, and hardworking son. Dewey Dell and Vardaman are below average as both of them are the issues of Addie’s indifference. Here Faulkner highlights the presence of past in the present. Addie’s past remains alive in the present of her children even after her death. This example amazingly proves that even dead ones live.

Addie’s death along with “universal natural catastrophes, which are flood and fire” (Stein 11) throws light on family relationships with their differences, jealousies, and selfish motives. Darl’s monologue starts with the word ‘Jewel’ which reveals his obsessive jealousy due to mother’s excessive love for him even at the stake of her moral principles. Darl observed that she used to make special things and hid them for him. It was surprising because Addie always taught her children that deceit was worse than poverty. Sometimes, Darl found her “sitting in the dark by Jewel where he was asleep… (and) hating herself for that deceit and hating Jewel because she had to love him so that she had to act the deceit” (84).

Cora also observed Addie’s favouritism for Jewel. The reason of this partiality lies in the fact that Jewel was the outcome of her warm, loving, and passionate relationship. So he is entirely different in nature. Dewey Dell also remarks, “And Jewel don’t care about anything he is not kin to us in caring, not care-kin” (16). Throughout her life Addie Bundren struggles for existence. Faulkner uses
juxtaposition and contrast to show the difference in the definitions of sin given by the ignorant masses and an educated school teacher, Addie. She comments upon the blind faith of Cora: “because she believed I, Addie, was blind to sin, wanting me to kneel and pray too. Because people to whom sin is just a matter of words, to them salvation is just words” (119).

To convey different hidden themes the novelist has used new and innovated techniques as “Form is not tradition, it always alters from generation to generation” (Foster 63). Entirely different treatment of multiple-points of view and stream of consciousness is evident in the novel. Hamblin opines that Faulkner’s marvelous stream of consciousness prose exposes “Addie’s frustrations, regrets, and secrets…”. Addie’s bitterness is the outcome of discrepancy between her dreams and reality. Throughout her life she struggles for survival. In this connection Hamblin comments, “In actuality she is an idealist who longs for, but never finds fulfillment of her hopes and aspirations” (5). Hemenway observes that multiple-narration create doubts even about those incidents which are happening before eyes. In The Sound and the Fury four viewpoints are given in four different parts, but in As I Lay Dying camera light is shifting from one character to another. By exploiting multiple-point of view the novelist has shown the selfishness, greediness, laziness, diplomacy, and troublesome nature of Anse who is not ready to spend money on a shovel for his wife’s burial, but the next day by grabbing Dewey Dell's money, he buys a set of new teeth for himself, and gets a new wife. Thus, this funeral “journey is a selfish act rather than an expression of devotion…” (Lester 2). Through the projection of Anse’s selfish nature, Faulkner justifies Addie’s behaviour and she gets the sympathy of readers. Different reactions to the death of Addie make the novel a tragi-comedy.

Charlotte Rittenmayor in Wild Palms is described as a dark-haired woman who has pale eyes with queer and hard expressions on her thin face. She does not wear slacks like ladies rather she wears man’s pants which are very short and tight. Their landlady, Martha, observes that all the time she sits in an easy chair while Harry does shopping, cooking, and collection of dry wood. Harry tells a lie to the agent that they are married, but the doctor at once recognizes that they are not married. Cottage gives the look of depression, desolation, and sadness which mirrors their depressive
and mirthless lives. Their cottage contains: “one bed whose springs and mattress are not good … cracked cups and saucers and drinking vessels which had once been containers of bought jams and jellies…” (8). The poverty of their rented cottage represents the poverty of eternal human values like love, patience, and compassion. Charlotte’s feral eyes have an expression of “profound and illimitable hatred… Not at the race of mankind but at the race of man, the masculine…” (11). When the Doctor looks at her he recognizes at once due to his professional efficiency that the lady has bore children, and the man with whom she is living is not her husband. It is really surprising for the doctor that she has “deserted husband and children for another man and poverty…” (11). When Harry comes at night for a phone call, the doctor thinks that now he will be able to solve the mystery of their relationship. Harry hesitatingly tells the doctor that she has profuse bleeding. Due to excessive pain she shouts and calls Harry “bloody bungling bastard” (21). Even in her pain she objects at the expenditure of five dollars for doctor’s fee. But when severe pain becomes intolerable for her she cries, “‘No no no no. Quick. There I go again. Stop me quick. I am hurting. I can’t help it. Oh, damn bloody bloody…” ’ (22). Through the stream of consciousness of Harry, the earlier incidents come to light that Charlotte Rittenmeyer met Harry when he was an intern. Due to his limited resources he had led a monastic life in his college. On his twenty seventh birth day another intern forcibly took Harry to a party in a studio where “Just a mob (was) sitting around on the floor in each other’s laps, drinking” (35). Giving the definition of mob T. S. Eliot writes that limitless industrialism creates “bodies of men and women – of all classes – detached from tradition, alienated from religion, and susceptible to mass suggestion: in other words, a mob. And a mob will be no less a mob if it is well fed, well clothed, well housed, and well disciplined” (53). In the party he was introduced to Charlotte who told him that she had two girl babies, and she was the only female member in the family of brothers. She further told him that she liked her eldest brother and as a sister cannot marry her brother so she married her brother’s friend, Rat. She also told that when she was seven years old she fell in fire during a quarrel with her brother. That time she got a scar on shoulder, side, and hip. She was in the habit of telling people about that scar herself. She also told him, “‘I work with clay and some in brass, and once with a piece of stone, with a chisel and maul’ ” (40). She invited him for dinner
and offered to pick him from the hospital in her car. Harry found that she had “a modest though comfortable apartment in an irreproachable neighbourhood near Andubon park, a negro maid, two not particularly remarkable children of two and four, with her hair. But otherwise looking like the father…” (42). After dinner at home Harry and Charlotte met five times in six weeks, and had lunch with those two dollars which he had to send to his sister. On the fifth time they went to a hotel. Till then Harry didn’t know a girl, so Flint told him about the queer behaviour of women. In the hotel they took a room on fictitious names and paid two dollars which had to be sent to his sister. Charlotte hated that secret trip and said, “Not like this, Harry, Not back alleys” (46). Her problem was that her Catholic husband would not give her divorce. Due to her so called passionate love she was ready to leave her children and said that when she saw Harry:

the second time she learned what she had read in books: that love and suffering are the same thing and that the value of love is the sum of what you have to pay for it and any time you get it cheap you have cheated yourself. So I don’t need to think about the children. (48)

The real problem of Harry and Charlotte was that they had little money as in five years she was able to save only a hundred and twenty five dollars. She asked him to tell her again, that he had no money so that her ears could hear and make sense as she was unable to understand. She unsuccessfully tried to control her wild passionate love which was ignoring all the bitter realities. On the second affirmation she started trembling, and said to herself: “All right. It makes sense. It must make sense” (49). She asked Harry not to touch her, and at once went out of the hotel room. Harry saw her crying in the taxi. When he tried to follow her she shouted at him, “ ‘Oh, you Pauper, you damned pauper, you transparent fool, It’s money again. After you paid the hotel two dollars you should have sent your sister and got nothing for it…’ ” (50). In the evening when her phone came to say ‘good bye’ to him, Harry told her that he had twelve hundred and seventy-eight dollars so their problem of money could be solved. He bought two tickets to Chicago. She came to join him at Charlotte Avenue station with her husband who was wearing conservative suit in formal manner. Her husband asked her to inform him about their whereabouts by the tenth of every
month. Simultaneously, he gave a warning also that if he would not get any information then he would hire a detective. Her husband was suffering a lot, and he gave a warning to Harry also. After his departure they ran to drawing room in the train, and made love. This incident highlights the lust of Charlotte for which she has left her home, husband, and children. Harry in his mind tried to find out the reason whether it was the romance of illicit love or “the passionate idea of two damned and doomed and isolated forever against the world and God and irrevocable which draws men…” (76). He reached to the conclusion that challenge of illicit love attracted them. In the morning Charlotte grasped his hair in the hotel and warned him:

listen: it’s got to be all honeymoon, always. Forever and ever, until one of us dies. It can’t be anything else. Either: heaven or hell: no comfortable safe peaceful purgatory between for you and me to wait in until good behavior or forbearance or shame or repentance over takes us. (83)

Explaining her concept of love she told Harry, “love does not die and it is like ocean which spews the man who makes bad smell” (85), and she would prefer to drown in that ocean. Harry accepted her ideas about love with boundless faith, but he couldn’t get good job while Charlotte being a good sculptor made elegant and fantastic statues of plaster. With her skill she earned little money and started to work with “concentrated fury” (90) to earn more. Harry realized that there was a part of her which had not been touched either by Rittenmeyer or him, which did not love anybody. Harry lost his job because of his illicit relations, and he started to spend the whole day in a park to conceal it. At night he felt relaxed in her hard arms. In the grim darkness he realized that “their joint life is a fragile globe, a bubble” (76) which was kept in balance by Charlotte. Then Mc Cord took them to Evanston where they could have a furnished cottage, food, and plenty of wood for chopping. There they could stay up to Christmas. Harry got surprised that woman had the ability “to adopt the illicit, even the criminal, to a bourgeois standard of respectability…” (104) as she used to make subtle alternations in their temporary home. Harry started to feel that he was secretly becoming mad. He felt excessively bored as he had nothing to do. In this depressive mood he felt himself cheated by an old whore and thought: “The old bitch
she betrayed me and now she doesn’t need to pretend” (115). When Charlotte found that Harry was becoming possessive she told him:

My God, I never in my life saw anybody try as hard to be a husband as you do. Listen to me, you lug. It was just a successful husband and food and a bed I wanted, why the hell do you think I am here instead of back there where I had them?(116-117)

When Harry suggested her to get a job in town, she refused, and cried, “No! No! Jesus God, no! Hold me! Hold me hard, Harry! This is what it’s for, what it all was for: so we could be together, sleep together every night…” (118). After that Harry got job in a mine to cure the injuries of miners. Mc Cord was surprised at their decision to leave the town where Harry was making good money, and Charlotte also had good job with a nice place to live in. Harry got the feeling that their existence was like the existence of robots so he answered Mc Cold that they were quitting the place, “‘To Love, then’” (131). He accepted that he was afraid because their life had become “mausoleum of love” (132) as they were busy in earning money. He felt that he had turned into a possessive husband while Charlotte had become a better man than Harry. Gradually, Harry was changed into a full fledged householder. Mc Cord was greatly surprised at their decision of going to Utah in February. In the mine Charlotte and Wilbourne met a younger couple: Buck and Billie. She at once recognized that they were not married, and suggested Charlotte to get married. In the freezing cold both the couples slept in one cabin on mattresses wearing woolen under wears because “thermometer reversed itself from fourteen below to forty one below” (192). In the month of March Buckner requested Wilbourne to do the abortion as Billie had become pregnant. He offered one hundred fifty pounds out of his total money of three hundred pounds. Wilbourne out rightly refused to do so, but Charlotte convinced him by saying, “‘It’s because they are in trouble. Suppose it was us. I know you will have to throw away something. But we have thrown away a lot, threw it away for love and we’re not sorry’” (194). Thus, she urged him to do abortion for the sake of love. After successful abortion Buckners left the mine and handed over them keys of commissary which was full of food. Immediately after their departure, Charlotte ran to the cabin suggesting him to leave the supper. As soon as she reached the cabin she stripped off her clothes, and asked
Wilbourne to hurry as six weeks had passed. Then in the bed holding him in her hard arms and thighs she said, “‘I guess I am a sissy about love. I never could, even with just one another person in the bed with us’” (197). Again this incident highlights Charlotte’s sexual hunger. After a month she informed Wilbourne about her pregnancy due to her carelessness, and foolish notion saying, “that when people loved hard, really loved each other, they didn’t have children, the seed got burned up in the love, the passion” (205). She asked Wilbourne to perform abortion immediately as her pregnancy was only sixteen days old. Simultaneously, she accepted that she could starve, but she could not have a child. Wilborne was extremely afraid of abortion. So he started to plan a family life while Charlotte urged him to perform abortion hurriedly. To satisfy Charlotte, Harry promised her to bring abortion pills from a brothel. She could not digest the abortion pills because of excessive vomiting. She started cursing Wilbourne and struck him hard with her hard fists. Then in utter depression she clung to him crying, “Oh, God, Harry, make me stop! Make me hush! Bust the hell out of me!” (216). In the fourth month of her pregnancy she made a compact with Wilbourne that they would not talk about her pregnancy for thirteen days. Till then Wilbourne would try for a decent job and in the case of his failure he would have to perform the abortion. Wilbourne could not get a nice job so he had to perform abortion. The abortion at the late stage created complications and Charlotte had a profuse bleeding.

Feeling her death near one day she goes to her husband’s house to meet her daughters for the last time. She returns the money of Rittenmeyer because her pride cannot allow her to use that money even in crisis. Her daughters do not come near her. When Rittermeyer insists then the elder one obediently leans towards her, but as she is unable to tolerate her caress, she tries to withdraw from her mother’s embrace. She immediately returns to her father, and Charlotte “sees her beckoning, gesturing in violent surreptitious pantomime to the little one”(222). Faulkner condemns the behaviour of Charlottes by showing her rejection by her own children. For the rude behaviour of the girls she blames Rittenmeyer: “so that is what you have taught them” (222). Irony of the situation lies in the fact that still she is blind to her own negation of motherly obligations by running after lust. In fact “in seeking sensual gratification,
she…fails to discharge her responsibilities as a mother” (Srinath 37). She lays the cheque upon the table and tells him that she was having profuse bleeding for a month and “two days ago the blood stopped and so there is something wrong, which might be something bad still- what do they call it? Toxemia, septicemia? It doesn’t matter- that we are watching for. Waiting for” (224).

Even at this juncture, her husband offers to take her to a good doctor, but she refuses saying, “‘let me go my way, Francis. A year ago you let me choose and I chose. I will stick to it’” (224). She requests him not to take any kind of action against Wilbourne. Her husband refuses by saying that she is asking too much as already he has given her the offer to come back which is exceptional for any man. When ultimately she is taken to a doctor, he rebukes Wilbourne and informs him that in the act of abortion he has in fact murdered her. To fulfill the formalities he called the police and Wilbourne is arrested. In jail Francis Rittenmeyer comes and asks him to go away with three hundred dollars, but Wilbourne refuses. He accepts his crime for which he gets punishment of fifty years in jail. Thus, the sin of illicit love leads to the total devastation of Charlotte and Wilbourne. This end reflects the influence of Calvinism upon Faulkner because “sexual sins are often portrayed as meriting severe punishment, as in the Old Testament they are among unclean of sins” (Fletcher 204). Innocent husband and children also suffer as the husband loses his wife, and children become orphans.

Mrs. Margaret Powers in Soldier’s Pay is a twenty four years old war widow of World War I. She appears in the beginning of the novel when during train journey she voluntarily takes the charge of a seriously wounded lieutenant of R.A.F., Donald Mahon, who is being taken to his home town after the war with a terrible facial scar. Private Joe Gillian and Cadet Julian Lowe, who are also returning from war, join him due to fellow feeling and fraternity. When Margaret looks at the seriously wounded soldier lying in helpless situation on a berth in the train, she immediately becomes sympathetic and attentive. She tries to help the sleeping officer by keeping him in a comfortable position. She shifts his pillow and moves his withered hand from his thigh.
Innovative Faulkner creates the image of Mrs. Powers through the technique of stream of consciousness. First of all adolescent Lowe observes “her pallid distinction, her black hair, the red scar of her mouth, her slim dark dress…” (27). Lowe becomes jealous of the wounded soldier as he is getting the whole attention of Margaret while he has been ignored with a brief glance. Looking at the critical condition of that soldier Margaret enquires from Gillian whether they will escort him, and she gets satisfaction when Gillian says yes. Lowe, who is intensely attracted towards Margaret, thinks that she looks young in spite of her knowledge and perhaps she is fond of dancing. Gillian also feels that she is about twenty five and married. He also observes that she is sad due to some severe disappointment or intense tragedy in her life. His keen observation registers the fact that she is not wearing any engagement ring though she looks rich. Thus, the image of Margaret starts to take shape as Faulkner draws the outer lines of the portrait of Mrs. Margaret Powers through the observation of Lowe and Gillian. Then he puts colour and life in the picture by giving a peep into the inner recesses of her mind. Lying in bed at night she misses her husband who died in young age. She feels that Fate has played a great joke with her. She also remembers that when she recognized the fact that their marriage was just the outcome of “a universal hysteria for the purpose of getting of each other a brief ecstasy…” (30). Then after some months, she decided calmly to break their marriage and wrote a letter to inform him about her decision, but he was already dead. In a very casual and impersonal manner she was notified that Richard Powers had been killed in an action. At night her intense pain of separation becomes intolerable. She recalls “those nights during which they had tried to eradicate tomorrows from the world” (31). She also feels guilty because at the time of his death he was not aware about her boredom and decision.

Margaret is a very soft hearted and emotional girl. Due to her compassionate nature she develops affinity with others very quickly, and feels their fears, pains, and sorrows. She has suffered the loss of her husband, and now the death of anyone seems unbearable to her. When she listens from Gillian that Mahon is going to die, she cries out, “why you deliberately took certain people to break your intimacy, why these people died, why you yet took others … Will my death be like this: fretting and
exasperating?” (33). In contrast to her passionate nature sometimes she feels herself emotionally barren. While looking at the scar of the dying soldier, she recalls her dead husband. Hotel’s cold room seems to her like a tomb and there also she again recalls her husband and silently cries in agony:

Dick, Dick, Dead, ugly Dick. Once you were alive and young and passionate and ugly, after a time you were dead, dear Dick: that flesh, that body, which I loved and did not love; your beautiful, young, ugly body, dear Dick, become now a seething of worms, like new milk. Dear Dick. (39)

Gillian’s sharp intellect senses Mrs. Power’s love for the wounded and dying soldier whom she is ready to help with her husband’s insurance money and Gillian points out towards the irony of the situation: “ ‘It’s a funny world, ain’t it?’… ‘Funny?’… ‘Sure. Soldier dies and leaves you money, and you spend the money helping another soldier die comfortable. Ain’t that funny?’ ” (38).

Margaret has also been shown as a young woman of temperate nature and mature thought. She understands Lowe’s infatuation and consequent jealousy, so very gently she tells him that she does not love anybody. Lowe feels jealous because he thinks that she loves Mahon, and he says, “ ‘I would take his scar and all’ ” (47). Margaret tries to soothe his troubled mind with great patience, but Cadet Lowe’s adolescent uncontrollable passion is not ready to listen anything and he seeks a promise from Margaret that she will wait for him until he becomes mature and makes a lot of money. Margaret tries to convince him and she kisses him affectionately in motherly manner. But this compassionate and loving Margaret hates Cecily’s artificial show of love for Donald and gets angry. When in her mind she searches for the reason of her anger, she realizes that she has fallen in love with the wounded soldier:

What makes me furious is her thinking that I am after him, am in love with him! Oh, yes, I’m in love with him’. I’d like to hold his poor ruined head against my breast and not let him wake again ever… Oh, hell, what a mess it all is! (77-78)
The shock of her husband’s death has made her immune to public opinion. When Gillian mentions about the spoiling of her good name, she replies that only Men are the ones who worry about good names of women while they have other things to worry about and says, “a good name is like a dress that’s too flimsy to wear comfortably” (100). This simile is again used in the novel, As I Lay Dying. Thus, Faulkner’s art makes his images of woman life like. They seem to be distinct individuals who have emotions, thoughts, opinions, principles, and own philosophies of life. Mrs. Powers is so considerate for the emotions of others that she cannot assimilate enough courage to tell the reactor about his son’s deteriorating condition. She expresses her feelings before Gillian, “‘I didn’t have the heart to, Joe. If you could have seen his face! and heard him! He was like a child, Joe. He showed me all of Donald’s things’ ”(102). She herself feels miserable at their helplessness as they are unable to save the life of Donald despite of their best efforts. The most appreciable characteristic of her nature is that she herself is a victim of the monster of war. So, she not only understands the pitiable condition of grief-stricken father, but also tries to help him in every possible way. Her sympathy and helpful nature shows that despite of depressive and awesome experience of war’s destruction, Margaret has a soft compassionate human heart which can understand and feel the sorrows of others. At the death of Donald she clings to Emmy and feels “a recurrent mutual sorrow” (106). Through the character of Margaret Powers, Faulkner projects that love and compassion for others complemented with the depth of feelings are the qualities due to which man will survive. Later on these thoughts found expression in his Nobel Prize speech in 1950. Margaret is a stranger still she tries to convince Mr. Saunders that he should send Cecily to meet wounded Mahon to strengthen his morale, to give some reason to live for, and to remove his terrible apathy and detachment. She holds him tightly and asks him to remember that he might have been his son. This passionate appeal reveals Margaret’s serious concern for the wounded Mahon’s welfare. Her bodily strength and mental power are also experienced by Mr. Saunders when she seeks a promise from him. Due to her sincere pursuance Mr. Saunders has to say ‘yes’. While shaking hand he again feels her power. Margaret and Gillian meet the specialist from Atlanta at the station. They tell him about Mahon’s condition and take a promise to hide the reality from him and not to kill the hope of his father
though it was against doctor’s professional ethics. After examining Mahon the specialist declares, “‘He is practically a dead man now. More than that, he should have been dead these three months were it not for the fact that he seems to be waiting for something’” (152). The dying officer also mirrors the individual horrors, anguish, and fear of war. While describing the relationship of Mrs. Powers and Mr. Power, Faulkner presents the whole panorama of wartime:

all soldiers talking of dying gloriously in battle without really believing it or knowing very much about it, and how women kind of got the same idea, like the flu- that what you did today would not matter to-morrow, that there really wasn’t to-morrow at all.(160)

Narrating the story of her life Margaret tells Gillian that during war young girls who were helping in canteens were trying to have a good time with the soldiers who were coming on leave. They were marrying young soldiers though they were very much aware of the fact that their marriages had no future. But still they wanted to enjoy their present time without any worry about future. Margaret also married a young officer, Mr. Powers, and stayed with him for three nights beguiling herself like child in dark: “it was like when you are a child in the dark and you keep on saying, It isn’t dark, it isn’t dark” (161). Ignoring the bitter reality and imminent danger is the nature of human psyche. In Camus’ *The Plague*, the imprisoned town’s people do the same. In evening they meet in the hotels and dance till midnight to forget the increasing terror of plague. After three days of their marriage Dick’s boat sailed, and Margaret missed him intensely. Then gradually he became a shadowy person writing letters to her. She feels guilty that Dick was ignorant about her decision at the time of his death. Now she wants to cleanse her guilty conscience by helping the other dying soldier. This late revelation is also the technique of Faulkner as he dives deep in the consciousness of his characters to find out the reason behind an action. By showing human weaknesses, their inner compulsions, complexes, depressions, ambitions, and distinct views Faulkner proves that these images are living entities. In fact, Margaret is the main exponent of the theme in the novel, *Soldiers’ Pay*. 
Margaret is juxtaposed and compared with Cecily and Emmy in the beginning of the novel as Margaret is projected as a woman of strong will. Moreover, in comparison to Cecily and Emmy she is proved more intelligent, capable, and practical. She tries to help everyone and is proved a pillar of post for others though she herself is living with a broken and grief-stricken heart due to her husband’s death, and her own infidelity. At noon time when everybody takes rest and gets imprisoned in the shell of his own thinking, her heart cries:

Dick, Dick. How young, how terrible young: tomorrow must never come. Kiss me, kiss me through my hair, Dick, Dick. My body flowing away from me, dividing. How ugly men are naked. Don’t leave me, don’t leave me! No, no! We don’t love each other! We don’t! We don’t! Hold me close, close…. (181)

Here, through the stream of consciousness technique Faulkner exposes the inner most hidden feelings of a woman’s heart, and how contradictory thoughts come simultaneously as human beings are the combinations of paradoxes and contrasts. The condition of Margaret is also juxtaposed with Mrs. Mitchell as both of them have lost their dear ones in war. While Mrs. Mitchell, whose son was killed in war, silently shrieks in her heart, “Dewey, my boy” (182), Margaret talks to Dick in her afternoon slumber also, “I miss you like the devil, Dick. Someone to sleep with? Dick” (182).

Cecily and Mrs. Powers are shown opposite to each other. Basically Mrs. Power is an intelligent lady with compassionate heart and other skills. While Cecily is incapable of taking care of herself, Mrs. Power takes care of the wounded soldier also. Cecily is the fiancée of Donald even then she feels no sympathy and compassion for him, but only aversion. Moreover, Margaret has the ability to turn the table on cunning persons like Jones.

Thus, Margaret is a lovable character whose qualities come before the readers through the various points of view. The specialist, who comes to see Donald, appreciates Margaret. Jullian Lowe also writes many letters to her, and in one he writes, “How can I tell you how much I love you, you are so different from them. Loving you has already made me a serious man realizing responsibilities. They are all
so silly compared with you talking Jazz…” (281). Even after the death of Donald, Gillian puts pressure on her through his earnest requests to marry him while she expresses her fear, “‘If I married you you’d be dead in a year, Joe. All the men that marry me die, you know’ ” (312). While Gillian is ready to take the risk she refuses saying that she is too young to bury three husbands. Her psychological fear does not allow her to take another chance, but when she finds that her refusal has hurt Gillian she tries to pacify him with the offer of living together without marriage. Gillian refuses because he does not love her body rather he loves her soul. Through their example Faulkner gives his definition of love, and shows the morality that still persisted in 1920s.

Kind-hearted Margaret helps a bereaved father when he tells her that Cecily has broken the engagement she reacts immediately as she knows that Donald’s unfulfilled wish of marriage will not let him die. Looking at the misery of that poor and helpless father, Margaret offers to marry the dying Donald says: “‘I’m going to marry him myself. I intended to all the time. Didn’t you suspect?’ ” (281). She is so much concerned with the grief of the rector that she shows her own willingness so that he should not feel guilty. She herself wishes to wash out her own guilt of not loving Dick because being blind Donald Mahon is not concerned with whom he is getting married. He only needs the satisfaction of the fulfillment of his last wish, which will bring him a peaceful death. Paradoxically Margaret feels lonelier after her marriage with Donald.

Mrs. Burney in the same novel is the mother of a dead soldier, Dewey, whose death in war makes his mother a respectable member of the society of Charleston. She is the wife of an ordinary carpenter, but her son’s sacrifice in war has changed her status. Now she has become an important and respected member of the society to whom all the higher class ladies like Mrs. Worthington and Mrs. Saunders talk. She accepts, “Her boy had done this for her, his absence accomplishing that which his presence had never done, could never do” (179). In fact, before going to war he was in jail because of the theft of fifty pounds of sugar, and when war began he was sent to join war. Mrs. Burney always wears a black mourning dress. When she goes to meet wounded Donald she feels jealous that Rector’s son has come back with a
woman while her own son has died. Here, the novelist exposes the working of human heart where feelings of sympathy and envy exist side by side. On the surface level she is enquiring about the well-being of Donald and in her heart she is crying for her son: “ ‘I come to see how your boy is getting along, what with everything.’ (Dewey, my boy)” (182). Simultaneously, she feels satisfied also that now the important ladies of the town talk to her. Her point of view throws light on the character of Cecily also as she thanks to God that her son is not engaged to a characterless girl like Cecily because he is already dead. When on the request of the Rector Mrs. Burney promises to come often she again remembers her son: “ ‘It’s so nice he come home safe and well. Some didn’t’. (Dewey) (Dewey)” (183). She compares herself with Mrs. Worthington who is a rich widow and has a car, but still she has “gouty painful movement” (260) while she herself walks more actively. When she gets the news of Donald’s marriage again she becomes sad that her son could not marry as he died young. She tells Mrs. Powers that her son was a good soldier, but “ ‘them folks got him killed with just a lot of men around: nobody to do nothing for him’ ” (261).

Through her name and image Faulkner shows the feelings of envy and jealousy among women. She is shown as a typical mother whose heart all the time longs for her own son.

Mrs. Worthington in Soldiers’ Pay is a rich widow who suffers from rheumatism. She has a car and a Negro driver. She lives in a big and beautiful house which her husband “had bequeathed, with a colourless male cousin…” (187). She believes that women should be given equal rights. Despite of her non adjusting temperament she is given importance because she has “ money- that panacea for all ills of the flesh and spirit” (187). When she comes to know that Donald loves music she sends her car and Negro driver for Donald to go to the town’s club.

In his first novel Faulkner presents twelve images of woman who are altogether different due to different traits, whims, principles, and opinions. Moreover, they are taken from different sections of society. Even their names have connotations to their qualities as Mrs. Powers proves a powerful supporting pillar for Donald, Emmy, the rector, and Lowe. Mrs. Burney has a heart which always burns with envy and jealousy. Emmy has amicable nature. Cecily is a sizzling presence for males. Mrs.
Worthington is a worthy woman due to her money. Mrs. Meddlesome Henderson meddles in the affairs of others.

Mrs. Wiseman in Mosquitoes is a lady who comments upon all the people on the board of Nausikaa. She keeps a close watch on everyone’s movement and tries to attract Talliaferro. Mark comments upon her, “you are a widow only by courtesy . . . like the serving maids in sixteenth century literature” (83). But she is not discouraged by this sarcastic remark. She frequently yawns stretching her arms to encourage men. Moreover, despite of her mature age she behaves foolishly like a teenage incorrigible romantic girl. Looking at the moon she comments, “Ah, Moon, poor weary one . . . By yon black moon…I wish I were in love….” (84). Her behaviour is opposite to her name. On the second day of their voyage when she comes to know that Nausikaa is struck up she consoles Mrs. Maurier at the breakfast table, and without understanding the gravity of the situation she says, “‘Anyway, I’ve always wanted to be ship wrecked…’” (94). Moreover, she always remains ready to take risks so when everybody wants to go back to the ship after a boat-ride as Jenny is frightened, but she insists to go for a long boat ride. When Jenny falls in water only Mrs. Wiseman has the presence of mind to thump her between the shoulders while others just look at her. On yacht also Mrs. Wiseman washes and binds Jenny’s wounded hand and helps her in changing her wet clothes. Thus, like a mother she helps the frightened and wounded Jenny.

Mrs. Ginotta in Mosquitoes represents the loneliness due to the loss of the familiar world in which she was reared, and lived for many years. Her son, Joe, has changed everything as he has become a modern American. Consequently, a dingy room full of heavy odour of Italian cooking has been changed into a “a tiled space cleared and waxed for dancing and enclosed on one side by mirrors” (246). According to Mrs. Ginotta’s standard the food that is being served there cannot be called food. Moreover, the place remains full of the noise of saxophones and drums which is accompanied by “a skill and metallic laughter of women, ceaseless and without joy; and the smells a blending of tobacco and alcohol and unchaste scent” (246). In this unknown, unfamiliar, and totally changed world Mrs. Ginotta is a pathetic lonely figure because of her deafness and death of her husband. Her sons have totally
changed their place as they have become rich modern Americans. In addition to it, her sons have no time for her because now they are extremely busy due to the expansion of their business. Consequently, the poor old lady remains quiet all the time. Her only task is to prepare food for her sons on a stove which is also new and unfamiliar. Her sons remain so busy that it is difficult for her “to anticipate their meal times…” (247), so the whole day and night she silently waits for them. She has become now only a spectator rather than an involved participant in the activity that is going on in her own place. Her sons have several automobiles, but she stubbornly refuses to ride in them. Nobody is aware of her tragic life in which her all surroundings have been changed in the name of modernity. Her sons are praised by the neighbors who often comment, “how good the Ginotta boys were to the old lady” (247). Through Mrs. Ginotta’s predicament Faulkner shows the changing South in the name of modernity where old people feel lost, bewildered, and stupefied.

Belle in Sartoris is a young looking woman whose face generally has “its familiar expression of strained and vague dissatisfaction” (29). Belle’s husband tells Horace that if someone hears Belle he feels that she is wild like a tiger. It is the irony of Harry’s life that he is too much possessive about her family, and says to Horace, “‘I’d kill the man that tries to wreck my home like I would a damn snake’ ” (191). Harry is ready to compromise in each and every way to save his home. He feels women are born different from men and they complain when they are not pampered. In this manner Belle’s image starts to take shape through the point of view of her husband. Belle attracts Horace with her hidden gestures. She takes him to her music room, and there she kisses him passionately while her husband is busy in Tennis match. Any disturbance in their romantic scene is intolerable to her. In passionate clinging she expresses her wish, “I want to have your child, Horace,” but it’s an irony that she becomes mad with fear when her own daughter, Titania, enters the room. She rebukes her for coming home so early, “‘Go on and play, Belle. Why did you come in the house? It isn’t supper time yet’ ” (195). She cheats her husband, and hideously develops relations with his friend. Miss Jenny also knows her flirting nature. She says, “Belle has a backstairs nature” (256). Basically, Belle’s interest in Horace is due to money. She takes his face in her two hands and asks, “‘Have you plenty of money
Horace?’” (257). When gets a positive answer, she embraces him so tightly that he feels himself drowning in a motionless sea. This incident shows that she is extremely money minded and her all relations are based on their bank balances. On Horace’s insistence she takes divorce and marries him. Thus, for her lust she breaks a prosperous and a well knit family. She again appears in Sanctuary and reference to their unsuccessful life is given by Miss Jenny. In fact, Belle represents negative side of a woman who runs after her whims and becomes a destroyer. She becomes a cause of sorrow for her first husband as well as the second husband. Moreover, she represents the modern society in which people believe in individual happiness at the cost of everything which ultimately creates chaos.

Lucy Cranston Sartoris was the wife of old Bayard and a proud mother of twins: John and young Bayard. According to Miss Jenny’s point of view she spoiled her sons as she herself raised them, and did not allow anyone to control them. According to Lucy, Sartoris were the best people and it was “divine providence that let her marry one Sartoris and be the mother of two more Pride false pride” (74).

Mrs. Blond in the same novel is a rich woman who believes in show off. Her son Gerald is Quentin’s friend. She wants that her son should have friendship and connections with rich and respected families. She tells Quentin about, “Gerald’s horses and Gerald’s niggers and Gerald’s women” (69-70). She also tells about his apartments in town and his rooms in college. Most of the time, she accompanies her son wherever he goes, and takes interest in every minute detail connected with Gerald.

Cora Tull in the novel, As I Lay Dying, is a simple and God-fearing rural woman. She is a good housewife and saves eggs for cakes. Miss Lawington has advised her to prepare cakes to “earn enough at one time to increase the net value of the flock the equivalent of two head” (3). But it is her hard luck that the lady, who has ordered for cakes, cancels the meeting. She refuses to buy cakes. Kate opines that she should take cakes, and comments, “‘But those rich town ladies can change their minds. Poor folks can’t’” (3). Cora does not get depressed as she believes: “‘Riches is nothing in the face of the Lord, for He can see into the heart’… ‘If it is His will that
some folks has different ideas of honesty from other folks, it is not my place to question his decree’ ” (4). By the juxtaposition of the views of mother and daughter the novelist has shown the generation gap. Moreover, Cora represents rural women and rural environment. Their hard life and limited resources are contrasted with the ladies of towns who hold parties. Poor village folks are afraid of snakes also which break hen-houses quickly. Cora remembers the occasion when they lost many hens and could not afford eggs for themselves.

Faith in God and religion is the chief source of her infinite strength, happiness, and peaceful life. Cancellation of prepared order can be the cause of a quarrel or Cora’s cry, but instead of that she thinks it is God’s will that some people have different views about honesty. Serving through limited resources is a matter of great joy for her, and she feels that those eggs are given to them.

Cora’s faith in God, her pious character, and peaceful life presents a contrast to the life of Addie who is not satisfied with her life, husband, and children. Cora admits that Addie is the best cook of cakes in their area, but simultaneously she feels that “the eternal and the everlasting salvation and grace is not upon her” (4). Cora’s monologues set the background of the novel with her comments on the nature of different characters. She is well aware of Bundren’s laziness and greediness. She is surprised to see that Darl and Jewel are being sent to earn three dollars while Addie is on death-bed: “Not him to miss a chance to make that extra three dollars at the price of his mother’s good bye kiss. A Bundren through and through, loving nobody, caring for nothing except how to get something with the least amount of work” (13).

Cora knows Addie’s nature, and her special love for Jewel. Cora has been coming to Addie’s home regularly for last three weeks at the cost of her own family and duties so that she should be with Addie in her last moments to give her courage. She herself wants that in her last moments she should be surrounded by her relatives, children, and husband. Moreover, she hopes for a calm death as she has tried to live rightly according to the will of God. She knows that Addie Bundren is dying alone as because of her pride she is hiding her broken heart even at the time of her death. Cora
thinks that it is her bad luck or punishment of God that while she is dying her dearest son, Jewel, is not with her.

Cora is a very dedicated Christian and even at night when storm is going to set on, Cora asks her husband to put the team in because she guesses that Addie has died. Her husband is not ready to go with his practical plea that if they need them they will send for them. Simultaneously, Vernon Tull feels that he is blessed in having a wife who believes in God, and tries to help others at the time of need. He also feels that Cora is right when she says, “the reason the Lord had to create women is because man dont know his own good when he sees it” (46).

Cora is proud of her openness as she has nothing to hide, so she has complete trust in her God and her reward. Cora says to her husband that she has given birth to the children who are sent to her by the Lord. She accepted it without fear and terror because her faith is strong. If she has no son it is also God’s will. Her husband feels that she can manage everything, so he can have his mind at rest. He concludes that it is for man’s good to leave the charge of house to the woman.

Cora and Addie are opposite to each other. Cora is extremely religious as she used to tell Addie that she has been blessed with children to comfort her hard human lot. She adds that God gives the gift of voice so that human beings can raise their voices in His undying praise. She also advises Addie to open her heart to the Lord and receive His grace. But Addie replies, “ ‘I know my own sin. I know that I deserve my punishment, I do not begrudge it’ ” (112). Cora’s point of view is the main tool through which Faulkner throws light on different aspects of Addie’s life. She is well aware of Addie’s partiality for Jewel and she also knows that brother Whitfield tried to remove her vanity. Cora feels that Addie’s only sin she ever committed was being partial to Jewel who never loved her. Thus, according to Cora, Jewel was Caddy’s punishment. But in contrast to Cora’s view Addie feels that Jewel is her cross and he will be her salvation also. He will save her from the water and from the fire. Cora considers it a spoken sacrilege and she asks Addie to kneel down and pray to God, but Addie doesn’t kneel down. Cora says:
She just sat there, lost in her vanity and her pride that closed her heart to God and set that selfish mortal by in His place. Kneeling there I prayed for her. I prayed for that poor blind woman as I had never prayed for me and mine. (113)

Cora’s point of view about Addie not only throws light on her traits, but projects the ideas, thoughts, notions, and principles of Cora. Thus, the point of view technique serves dual purpose as this technique magically makes fictional characters life like.

Miss Lawington in *As I Lay Dying* is a friend of Cora Tull, and she suggested her to save one egg per day for a month and then make cakes to sell in the town which will get her more money.

Lula Armstid is the wife of Mr. Armstid. They allow the Bundren family to stay at their house for one night. Addie’s rotten dead body is kept in their barn which attracts buzzards. Lula Armstid is shocked too much to know about Addie’s rotten body that she calls it an outrage: “ ‘It’s a outrage’… ‘He should be lowed for treating her so’ ” (127).

Rachel is the wife of Samson who offers food and shelter for a night to Bundren family. When Anse says that they have got their food in their basket he replies, “ ‘And when folks stops with us at meal time and wont come to the table, my wife takes it as a insult’ ” (74). When Rachel comes to know that Addie has been dead for four days, she becomes upset, and says that it is an outrage. She starts crying, and says, “ ‘all the men in the world that torture us alive and flout us dead, dragging us up and down the country’ ” (75). Her comments project the condition of rural women.

Ruby La Marr in *Sanctuary*, an epitome of love, is a woman whose intensity of love for Mr. Goodwin is beyond measuring. She has sacrificed her whole life and money to release Goodwin from prison. She tells Temple that Goodwin was a soldier in Philippines, and there he killed another soldier in fight for a nigger woman. He was sent to Leavenworth, but when war came he was sent to the war where he got two medals. Then after his return from war he was again put into the prison until the
lawyer got a politician to get him out. After his release she could leave jazzing. On the astonishment of Temple over jazzing she irritatingly says, “‘Yes, putty face! . . . How do you suppose I paid the lawyer. And that’s the sort of man you think will care that much’” (48).

Now she is living with Goodwin Lee as a wife, without marriage. She cooks food for Goodwin and his men. She is a mother of a sickly child who looks as if he is going to die. She takes care of the house and she is facing many hardships as she has to bring water from the distance of miles. When Temple offers her own fur coat as a cost for the arrangement of a car to escape from that dangerous place, she replies that at one time she had three fur coats. Due to her intense love for Goodwin she is well acquainted with the depth, helplessness, and compulsions of love. She understands Temple’s ignorance about real relationship with a man, and she says:

Man? You’ve never seen a real man. You don’t know what it is to be wanted by a real man. And thank your stars you haven’t and never will, for then you’d find just what that little putty face is worth, and all the rest of it. You think you are jealous of when you’re just scared of. And if he is just man enough to call you whore, you’ll say Yes, Yes, and you’ll crawl naked in the dirt and the mire for him to call you that…. (49)

She calls Temple a fool but simultaneously she promises to protect her. She says that she knows the Temple type of girls who always run after love but can’t recognize a real man. She also tells that for the freedom of Goodwin she had worked in nightshift as a waitress, and to save money she lived in a single room for two years. Thus, Ruby loves Goodwin intensely, and she has completely dedicated her life to him, but irony of her fate is such that in return of her labour and hardships for his freedom she got only severe beating.

Ruby gets angry at Temple’s reckless behaviour of running away from the University and putting herself in a very dangerous position. She is very much aware of the gravity of the situation in which Temple has fallen due to Gowan. She is very well acquainted with the disasters that will come with approaching night. She
repeatedly asks Temple to go away from the place. Looking at her helplessness she agrees to arrange for a car. When Van again and again tries to molest Temple, Ruby saves her with the help of Goodwin. Temple takes shelter in kitchen and she stands behind the chair in which Ruby is sitting. At one time Ruby becomes jealous also when she thinks that Goodwin is also running after Temple like Van and Popeye. Ruby is very alert as even in the darkness of night she can see, and can recognize all the men by the way they breathe. She does not sleep during night as she is aware of the coming disaster. She knows that Tommy is following Popeye who is standing near the bed of Temple and Gowan. Looking at Popeye’s growing interest in Temple she stealthily goes near sleeping Temple and wakes her. She puts her hand on Temple who starts struggling due to fear. When Temple demands her cloths she rebukes her, “‘Do you want your clothes’, …, ‘or do you want to get out of here?’” (67). Ruby and Temple move like ghosts on their bare feet. They leave the house and walk towards their barn. Fumbling at the walls in pitch dark, Ruby opens a door, and guides Temple to a single step into a floored room where she can “feel walls and smell a faint, dusty odour of grain…” (67). Temple whirls and springs towards Ruby when her feet touch a mouse. Ruby consoles her. She hides Temple in their crib to save her from Van and Popeye. But she is unable to conceal Temple for a long time as Popeye enters the crib and spoils her virginity with a corncob. In the morning Ruby finds that Popeye is compelling Temple to enter his car and forcibly taking her away to town. When she comes back to her house she comes to know about the murder, and she is sent to make a phone call to Sheriff. She is so much afraid that she is not able to speak properly, and in a fumbling manner she informs him about the murder. It is again her hard luck that innocent Goodwin is imprisoned for the murder of Tommy. Poor Ruby struggles hard to get justice for her husband. While the whole society has turned against him, she seeks help from Horace Benhow who in spite of the opposition of society tries to defend him from the false charges of rape and murder. When Horace’s sister objects and asks him not to mix himself deliberately with, “a murderer’s woman” (93), he acquaints his sister with the miserable condition of Ruby by saying:

‘I can’t help it. She has nothing, no one. In a made-over dress all neatly about five years out of mode, and that child that never has been more than half
alive, wrapped in a piece of blanket scrubbed almost cotton white. Asking nothing of anyone except to be let alone, trying to make something out of her life when all you sheltered chaste women’ ” (93).

Even in this wretched condition Ruby La Marr gets no sympathy from women folk and society. Narcissa, a high class woman also feels that it is her insult that her brother brings “a street walker, a murderess” (94) in her house. She does not allow her brother to keep Ruby in their house even for a single night. She creates such a fuss that Horace Benhow has to shift her to a hotel during night. There also she is not allowed to stay by the Church ladies. Only because of Narcissa’s propaganda all the women in town have become her enemies. Even the good customers of Goodwin, who have been buying whisky from him and trying to seduce her wife, now beat him. The Baptist also gives a sermon on their relationship, and declares Goodwin: “as a murderer, out as an adulterer, a polluter of the free Democratico Protestant atmosphere of Yoknapatawpha county” (102). Narcissa informs Horace Benhow that according to her information town’s people want to burn them as an example to the child who should be sent to an orphanage. The novelist here shows the diplomacy, infidelity, and fickle mindedness of public. Miserable condition of Ruby reflects the cruelty, insensitivity, and selfishness of society. It also shows exploitation of a poor woman by woman only. First of all Temple brings bad luck to her and then due to her mistake Ruby looses everything. Then Narcissa becomes her enemy. In this tragic situation she has no one except Horace Benhow who gives her consolation sincerely and asks not to worry at all as people know that Goodwin Lee is innocent.

Ruby la Marr informs Horace in the beginning of the case that she has no money with her. It is an absurd situation that Horace and Ruby do not get success in convincing and preparing Goodwin to tell the name of the actual murderer, Popeye. Goodwin is too much afraid that he tells Horace that he cannot take the name of Popeye as he has threatened him to kill. Goodwin’s fear and miserable situation expose the hollowness of the claims of law and order in a civilized society. Ruby has blind faith in the decision of Goodwin so repeatedly she says, “ ‘I guess Lee knows what to do’ ” (106).
It is a tragedy that Ruby is punished severely though she has done nothing wrong. The arrival of Temple and her absurd behaviour in her house has invited bad luck for Ruby. She cries bitterly and asks:

But why must it have been me, us? What had I ever done to her, to her kind? I told her to get away from there. I told her not to stay there until dark. But that fellow that brought her was getting drunk again and him and Van picking at each other. If she’d just stopped running around where they had to look at her. She wouldn’t stay anywhere. She’d just dash out one door, and in a minute she’d come running in from the other direction. (129)

Temple becomes the reason of fight between Gowan and Van, Tommy’s death, and Goodwin’s imprisonment leading to his horrible death in fire made by the town’s men to burn him. Bad luck of helpless Ruby worsened further when Temple’s evidence instead of proving Goodwin innocent, proves him to be a rapist as well as the murderer. Thus, poor Ruby becomes the victim of lawless society of rich people.

Mrs. Walker in Sanctuary is the wife of Ed. Walker, and she is the only one who helps Ruby La Marr when all the Church women have turned against her, and she is even ejected from the hotel. That time Mrs. Walker allows Ruby to stay for a night in her lodging on the Prison’s premises.

Mrs. Armstid in Light in August is the example of a rural woman’s pity, sympathy, and kindness towards a pregnant woman even though it is illegitimate. While Armstid is giving lift to Lena Grove, he is uncertain about the reaction of Martha, but he is sure that “women folks are likely to be good without being very kind” (10). Martha is a “gray woman with a cold, harsh, irascible face, who bore five children in six years and, raised them to man and womanhood. She is not idle” (13). She is very much aware about the ways of the world, and is surprised at the foolishness of Lena Grove. She is hard working like a rural man, and her face is compared with a defeated general. She rejects Lena’s offer of help by saying that she is cooking three times a day for thirty years. Despite of her displeasure on Lena’s
conduct she gives her hard-earned money to Lena. This shows the generosity of a poor rural woman.

Mrs. Beard is the owner of a boarding house. She is “a comfortable woman, with red arms and untidy grayish hair” (78). Byron Bunch lives in her boarding house. When he takes Lena Grove there she arranges a cot for Lena in her own room. This gesture shows her kindness and consideration for a needy woman. Her reaction is totally different from a rich woman, Narcissa. It is a proof that urbanization kills the humanity.

Mrs. McEacbern in the same novel is an example of woman’s victimization by her husband. She is shown very much afraid of Simon. She is unable to save Joe Christmas from his beating though she loves him extremely. She gives him food secretly. But because of her kindness she is exploited by Joe Christmas also as he always takes her little secret money without asking. She is an image of a poor and helpless woman who is frequently humiliated and beaten by her husband. Moreover, she is also exploited by her adopted son only because of her weakness that she has a loving, affectionate, and sympathetic nature. Here, the novelist highlights a glaring truth that for centuries women have been exploited only because of their goodness and affection.

Joanna Burden in the same novel is shown as a middle aged woman who lived in a big house in which she was born and brought up, but still she was considered an alien because she was “the descendant of them whom the ancestors of the town had reason to hate and dread” (42). She worked for the welfare of Negroes. Christmas began to live in a nigger’s cabin behind her house, and started to sell whisky. He also got involved with Joanna, and she started to keep her back door unlatched for Joe. Brown also joined Joe in illegal selling of whisky as it was a profitable business. He also came to know about Joe and Joanna’s secretive physical relationship. Joanna wanted to convert Joe into a religious man. This issue ensued quarrel between them. Joe slashed her neck with a knife, and put her house on fire. A farmer saves her dead body from fire. Town’s people telegraph her nephew who announces a reward of one thousand dollar on her murderer. When Joe’s associate, Brown, hears about reward
money he comes to town to give information about Joe. He tells the sheriff that Christmas is the murderer, and he has been “living with Miss Burden like a man and wife for three years...” (86). Thus, he also exposes Joanna’s relationship with Joe. He also tells that she bought even an automobile for Joe. Faulkner here again shows the fickle mindedness of town’s people who have discarded Joanna because of her family and now all want to take revenge of her murder. Ultimately, they kill Joe and castrate him.

Ellen Coldfield in *Absalom, Absalom!* was a virtuous girl who belonged to a respectable family of Yoknapatawpha County. She became the part of the planning of Sutpen for getting respect in society as after making Sutpen Hundred, “he needed respectability, the shield of virtuous woman, to make his position impregnable...” (9). But Rosa calls Ellen “a blind romantic fool” (9) because she married a man who had no past. Ellen agreed to marry the man because “any wedding is better than no wedding and a big wedding with a villain is preferable to a small one with a saint” (40). Throughout her life Ellen lived in the shadow of fear, terror, and horror as she was in a “strong hold of an ogre or a djinn” (16).

Thus, these Struggling Survivors struggle hard to survive in life. Sometimes, due to their individual wishes, depressive philosophy, artificial behaviour, materialistic approach, lust, and negation of their family obligations, they are proved dangerous for their near and dear ones. In fact, they represent “the negative aspects of the Earth Mother associated with sensuality, sexual orgies, fear, danger, darkness, dismemberment, emasculation, death...” (Guerin 163). Faulkner has never appreciated their attitude and approach to life. Sometimes, he condemns their behaviour through the point of view of another character. He appreciates only those women who have accepted their lot, and perform their duties sincerely.