FAULKNER'S ANIMALS

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In attempting to reduce the rather copious and varied works of Faulkner to a unit that could be handled within the necessarily limited scope of an honors paper, I have chosen to deal with Faulkner's use of animals, or more particularly, man-animal relationships. As I wished to deal only with his novels rather than his short stories, or both, this subject matter automatically limited the number of novels with which this study could deal. Of those novels in which animals appear, this paper will be concerned with Go Down, Moses, A Fable, The Hamlet and As I Lay Dying.

The use of animals in literature as symbols or images began with the very earliest writers and continues to the present day. In Greek tragedy, for example, lion, wolf, and eagle imagery were used to emphasize qualities in the characters of the drama. This imagery is frequently related to myths in which gods and goddesses took on animal shapes. Faulkner employs this kind of classical imagery, but in reverse. His animals sometimes take on the shape or qualities of gods or goddesses. Shakespeare uses animal imagery, as in Richard III, where the king's character is often described in bestial terms. Old Ben, in "The Bear," is in many ways similar to Melville's Moby Dick, who is perhaps the most famous animal in American fiction.
This paper is an effort to define how Faulkner uses animals, such as Lion, Old Ben and the spotted ponies, in the novels in which they appear; to discover their relationship to the main concerns of these novels; to show how they contribute to the understanding and interpretation of the novels.

The section of Go Down, Moses, entitled "The Bear," is probably the best known of Faulkner's stories about animals. Many are more familiar with "The Bear" as a short story. Yet in its final version, Faulkner, at least, intended it to be an integral part of Go Down, Moses, which he considered to be a novel. And since it was his intent that it be a part of a novel, I wish to consider it as such; first examining the section by itself, and then relating it to the novel as a whole.

Faulkner begins "The Bear" with the statement: "There was a man and a dog too this time," which he then qualifies: "Two beasts, counting Old Ben, the bear, and two men, counting Boon Hogganbeck, in whom some of the same blood ran which ran in Sam Fathers, even though Boon's was a plebeian strain of it and only Sam and Old Ben and the mongrel Lion were taintless and incorruptible." From the beginning Faulkner establishes that man and animal are connected in a special relationship. Boon and Sam, and the two animals, Lion and the bear, are related: man to man and animal to animal, and then animal to man. The complex relationship suggested by the opening paragraph leads into an action which will explain the relationship, and its significance, more fully.

Then Isaac McCaslin is introduced, a youth who had been "a man's
hunter" for the past six years, and who, for those six years, had been hearing "the best of all talking": talk of the wilderness, "the big woods, bigger and older than any recorded document," and of the men, the "hunters, with the will and hardihood to endure and the humility and skill to survive, and the dogs and the bear and deer juxtaposed and relieved against it . . ." (191). It soon becomes clear that the story is really about Isaac; the setting is the wilderness; the action will be that of the hunters and the quarry "juxtaposed and relieved" against the big woods.

With his main characters introduced, Faulkner begins the long process of developing the complex relationship between these characters; at the same time, he is evolving a set of symbols from these relationships. The meaning or significance of the story he is telling evolves slowly also, and is communicated only as the symbols become meaningful.

Faulkner says that before Isaac even came to the big woods for the first time, he "had already inherited then, without ever having seen it, the big old bear with one trap-ruined foot that in an area almost a hundred miles square had earned for himself a name, a definite designation like a living man: . . . a corridor of wreckage and destruction beginning back before the boy was born, through which sped, not fast but rather with the ruthless and irresistible deliberation of a locomotive, the shaggy tremendous shape. It ran in his knowledge before he ever saw it" (192-193).

Ike is thus added to the figures in the tableau of the opening paragraph, because he has "inherited" the old bear. Having established Isaac's connection with Old Ben, Faulkner goes on to present the sig-
nificance of the bear to the boy.

It [the bear] loomed and towered in his dreams, where it left its crooked print, shaggy, tremendous, red-eyed, not malevolent but just big, too big for the dogs which tried to bay it, for the horses which tried to ride it down, for the men and the bullets they fired into it; too big for the very country which was its constricting scope. It was as if the boy had already divined what his senses and intellect had not encompassed yet: that doomed wilderness whose edges were being constantly and punily gnawed at by men with plows and axes who feared it because it was wilderness, men myriad and nameless even to one another in the land where the old bear had earned a name, and through which ran not even a mortal beast but an anachronism indomitable and invincible out of an old dead time, a phantom, epitome and apotheosis of the old wild life which the little puny humans swarmed and hacked at in a fury of abhorrence and fear like pygmies about the ankles of a drowsing elephant; — the old bear, solitary, indomitable, and alone; widowered childless and absolved of mortality — old Priam reft of his old wife and outlived all his sons. (193-194)

The old bear is seen as the last representative of the wilderness and the "old wild life" of the men, the Indians, and the animals they hunted. Beside him, and the big woods itself, the men struggling to establish a hold on the land are dwarfed and insignificant, nameless. Yet they are to be the victors. The wilderness, already being driven in upon itself, is, Faulkner says, doomed; the old bear is solitary, without heirs, as is Sam Fathers, his human counterpart. The bear with a name, in a land where the men are nameless, and in contrast to their puny gnawing, has ravaged the land with locomotive-like power, much as did the dragons of fairy tale times. He has been "absolved of mortality," become a phantom, because his time has already passed; he has outlived the reign of the big woods; both he and the wilderness he represents are an "anachronism" watching their own slow death.

To young Isaac, the hunting trips were a "yearly rendezvous with
the bear which they did not even intend to kill," a "yearly pageant-rite of the old bear's furious immortality" (194). Ike and Sam, Boon, and the hunters, McCaslin Edmonds, Walter Ewell, Major de Spain and General Compson, have a respect and love for the wilderness. Each has claimed, or is heir to, a little of the land; they have hunted its wildlife for food and sport, and have pitted their skill and courage against its immense and brooding power. Yet they foresee its end; the yearly hunt will some day result in the old bear's death. And although the end of the bear will mark the death throes of the wilderness -- the passing of a way of life to which they have dedicated themselves -- they are actively engaged in an attempt to accomplish the very thing they dread.

Isaac, recalling the day when he was first allowed to enter the big woods, to learn the ways of a hunter, of a man, thinks that, at that moment, "it seemed to him that . . . he was witnessing his own birth. It was not even strange to him. He had experienced it all before, and not merely in dreams" (195-196). With this Faulkner begins to add a new dimension to the story: that of the idea of initiation. Ike's story is not only one of his coming to maturity, but of his coming into a knowledge of life, and of the purpose of his existence. Sam Fathers is his mentor, his spiritual father. "He entered his novitiate to the true wilderness with Sam beside him as he had begun his apprenticeship in miniature to manhood after the rabbits and such with Sam beside him . . ." (195). Ike, as described in "The Old People" (p. 165 especially), had become the spiritual heir of the old, part Negro, part Chickasaw Sam. Sam represents the old wild life of the
Indians, and especially their chiefs. He himself is considered a chief. Thus he and Old Ben are linked. Both are described as having something to pass on to the boy, who has become, as it were, their heir. This inheritance, which Ike has not yet received, is connected with, or made up of, the wisdom of the past, and a knowledge of life in close contact with nature, especially untamed nature.

Old Ben is first introduced into the story as a living animal when Faulkner describes the events that took place in Isaac's life six years prior to the time when "The Bear" begins. Ike and Sam are together on Ike's stand in the woods when the boy hears the dogs and recognizes a difference in their baying: "no ringing chorus strong and fast on a free scent but a moaning yapping an octave too high and with something more than indecision and even abjectness in it which he could not yet recognize, . . . taking a long time to pass out of hearing, leaving even then in the air that echo of thin and almost human hysteria, abject, almost humanly grieving . . . . 'It's Old Ben!' he cried, whispering" (197). Sam explains to the boy that once every year the old bear comes up around the camp "to see who's here, who's new in camp this year, whether he can shoot or not, can stay or not. Whether we got the dog yet that can bay and hold him until a man gets there with a gun. Because he's the head bear. He's the man" (198). "The man" is the title that the Chickasaw Indians gave their chief. Old Ben, in this passage, begins to take on a new aspect. Before this, he has been seen as a "shaggy tremendous shape," a representative of the wilderness. But here one sees the effect of his presence; the dogs become hysterical, abject, when they come across
his trail. As Sam explains to Ike the bear's appearance so near the camp, Ben takes on a somewhat human character, complementing the dogs' response to him with "almost human hysteria, ... almost humanly grieving." The bear is pictured as being aware of his impending destruction, and so he comes every year to check out the hunters, to find if the man and the dog, the ones introduced in the first paragraph of the story, have appeared yet. He is the old chief watching his domain's slow vanishment, alert for the time when he, too, must pass away.

It is not until Sam takes Isaac into the woods and shows him the old bear's footprint beside a claw-gutted log that the boy realizes the bear is actually a living creature. Ike experiences the same feeling of fear that he had heard in the dog's baying and had later sensed in the dogs' peculiar odor when they had returned from running the bear. He sees him as a living thing which the hunters have no hope of killing, merely because they lack the means, not because the hunt is a "pageant-rite" to celebrate the old bear's immortality. Yet for Ike the earlier vision contains as much truth as the present revelation. The phantom-shape, merging with the actuality of the bear, creates a powerful symbol for Ike, from which he must draw the full meaning before the knowledge and the virtues, pride, humility, courage, and endurance, can be accomplished and the meaning of his own and the bear's existence can be grasped; before the reason for which he had been chosen to participate in the yearly hunt for the bear -- and especially in its impending climax, the old bear's death -- can be made clear.

But Isaac, at this point in the story, has not yet actually seen
the bear. The learning process he is undergoing is very gradual; with each step he comes closer to the bear, and each time the scope of his understanding increases. In contrast to the "constricting scope" of the bear's domain, Ike's knowledge expands as he becomes more familiar with, and more skillful in, the wilderness, and as he approaches a fuller understanding of the symbolic qualities of the bear.

The completion of Isaac's training and search will come with the death of the bear and Sam Fathers. Ike will receive, as their heir, the spirit of these two ancients, and will become the sole representative of that which they represented when they were living. Ike will be able to reject the inheritance of his father's estate when he is twenty-one because he has, in a way, already received his patrimony, the one willed him by the bear and Sam.

The summer after his first hunting trip, Ike seeks out the bear on his own. At first he takes a watch and compass with him, but he has no luck. On the third day of his search, Sam Fathers tells him: "'It's the gun.' . . . 'You will have to choose'" (206). He then leaves the gun behind; as he wanders through the woods, he also sets aside the compass and the watch. Deep in a strange section of the wilderness, he becomes lost. But, as he is attempting to find his own trail, he suddenly comes across Old Ben's tracks. He follows the prints, which lead him back to the place where he had left the watch and compass.

Then he saw the bear. It did not emerge, appear: it was just there, immobile, fixed in the green and windless noon's hot dappling, not as big as he had dreamed it but as big as he had expected, bigger, dimensionless against the dappled obscurity, looking at him. Then it moved. It crossed the
glade without haste, walking for an instant into the sun's full glare and out of it, and stopped again and looked back at him across one shoulder. Then it was gone. It didn't walk into the woods. It faded, sank back into the wilderness without motion . . . . (209)

Part 1 ends with Ike's first encounter with the bear, a fitting conclusion. Big, "dimensionless," majestic, endowed with foreknowledge and appearing and disappearing like an apparition, the old bear has not merely been found by Isaac; the animal himself contributed to their meeting. In revealing himself where Ike had abandoned the tools of civilization, of its mechanization (symbols of the forces which are destroying the wilderness), the old bear acknowledges Isaac's sacrifice, which prefigures Ike's relinquishment of his inheritance. Looking back at Isaac over his shoulder, the bear acknowledges also the special bond existing between them.

After having once met the bear on its own terms, and having trained himself to know as much of the wilderness as he can, Ike decides to try to run the bear. Choosing a little fyce "not much bigger than a rat and possessing that sort of courage which had long since stopped being bravery and had become foolhardiness" (211), he and Sam, with the hounds, the little fyce, track down and ambush the bear.

They were so close that it turned at bay although he realized later this might have been from surprise and amazement at the shrill and frantic uproar of the fyce. It turned at bay against the trunk of a big cypress, on its hind feet; it seemed to the boy that it would never stop rising, taller and taller . . . . Then he realized that the fyce was actually not going to stop. He flung the gun down and ran. When he overtook and grasped the shrill, frantically pinwheeling little dog, it seemed to him that he was directly under the bear. He could smell it, strong and hot and rank. Sprawling, he looked up where it loomed and
towered over him like a thunderclap. It was quite familiar, until he remembered: this was the way he had used to dream about it.

Then it was gone. He didn't see it go. (211-212)

With this passage the story turns to a minor key. Heretofore the old bear had been practically unapproachable, except for that time when, unarmed, Isaac was rewarded with his first sight of Old Ben. But this time either Ike or Sam could have shot the bear, except that the time had not yet come. The experience was one more step in Ike's education. Ike becomes identified with the yce, as he runs without fear to snatch the little dog from a certain death, having thrown away his gun. But his education is not yet complete, just as the dog is not the one who can hold the bear. It will take a bigger and stronger dog, not only to bay Old Ben, but to teach Isaac the last lessons he needs to know about the wilderness, about the old bear and about himself. The right dog will have the true courage that Ike will need in order to understand the passing of the wilderness when it comes. Lion, the dog finally able to hold Old Ben, comes from the wilderness. It almost seems as if the wilderness were combining three of its last representatives, Sam, Boon and Lion, to bring about the end of the fourth, its chief, in order that Isaac can learn, from his participation in Old Ben's death, how to make his own sacrifice -- one that will leave him as solitary, widowered and childless as both Old Ben and Sam Fathers.

The dog, Lion, is described throughout the story as something impersonal, aloof, disdainful. His eyes "were not fierce and there was nothing of petty malevolence in them, but a cold and almost impersonal malignance like some natural force" (218). He treats the other dogs
with contempt. Once when a hound ran up to him, fawning, "Lion didn't snap at it. He didn't even pause. He struck it rolling and yelping for five or six feet with a blow of one paw as a bear would have done and came on into the yard and stood, blinking sleepily at nothing, looking at no one . . ." (220). He had been lured out of the wilderness by Sam. "'We don't want him tame,'" says young Isaac. "'We want him like he is. We just want him to find out that the only way he can get out of that crib and stay out of it is to do what Sam or somebody tells him to do'" (219). He is, in a way, like Ariel of The Tempest, captive and obedient, but knowing no emotion, loving no man and nothing except the wild life. He is the one destined to bring down the old bear, and he exists only for this purpose.

Boon and Lion are paired in the story; they possess many of the same qualities. Boon's eyes are "without depth or meanness or generosity or viciousness or gentleness or anything else" (227). Lion's eyes, as he looks at Isaac just before the final hunt, are "as depthless as Boon's, as free as Boon's of meanness or generosity or gentleness or viciousness" (238). Boon is "brave, faithful, improvident and unreliable" (228), and very strong. Side by side, he and Lion are like a well-matched team of horses. Old Ben and Sam, the chiefs, the last remnants of a time fast becoming only a memory, are destined to succumb together; Old Ben's release will be Sam's also. So Boon, the plebeian, the servant of Sam and also of Lion (in their mistress-lover-like relationship), will be the one to deliver the death stroke. Some of the old wild blood still runs in his veins; he, as well as Lion, has been chosen to accomplish the fated deed. Both the old bear and the
old man die at his hands.

Thus it can be seen that Faulkner's use of the animals in "The Bear" is highly complex. Each animal not only has the duality of functioning on both the symbolic and literal level, but each also plays a multiple role in that they relate to the different characters in different ways. And not only do they represent different things as they relate to different persons, but to one character they may have a multiple relationship. To Isaac, the bear is a symbol of the wilderness; to Sam, he is a fellow chief, a brother in solitude. To the hunters he is the representative of that life of hunting and manhood to which they have dedicated themselves, and of which they, like the bear, are the remnants.

But to Isaac the bear is more, for knowledge of the bear represents a culmination in his initiation into the ways of a hunter and of the wilderness. For Ike he also becomes equated with Sam and with the Old People, as if the old ways and the old secrets of that race, now gone, survived yet, as long as Sam and the old bear lived. And beyond this is the significance of what Ike learns as he seeks the bear. As he approaches the bear, he also approaches the knowledge and understanding which will enable him to relinquish his patrimony.

Faulkner uses the animals also to illustrate qualities in the human actors of "The Bear." Sam is made more understandable; his significance is drawn more clearly and fully by his relationship to the bear. But Sam also helps to clarify the meaning of the bear. The man and the animal unite to form a symbol of the old times, of the old life, now fading, and the old knowledge and freedom of spirit, of which, for
Ike, they are mediums.

The animals, as animals, stand in a special relationship to the men: they are bigger, more vital, assuming almost heroic proportions. Ike seeks the bear, but sees him only when the bear discerns he is ready for the revelation. The bear thus takes on somewhat god-like qualities, similar to pagan deities in special man-deity relationships. Boon becomes the "lover" of Lion, taking the feminine role; subjugating himself to such an extent that, after having fired five shots directly at Old Ben, and yet completely missing him, he refuses to sleep in the bed with Lion, as he usually does, because he feels he is unworthy of his consort. He values Lion's life above his own, seeming to recognize in the dog qualities which surpass those he possesses.

Old Ben is too big for the men who try to bring him down, and it takes another animal, untamed and uncivilized, a co-habitor with him in the wilderness, to bring the old bear to bay, just as it takes Boon, who is described in terms that leave little doubt that he is hardly civilized (he seems, at times, more an animal than a man), to kill the bear. Ike himself acknowledges the smallness of the space that separates him from the animal life he has contact with (200). In fact, Old Ben, and the old rattlesnake, as also the magnificent buck of "The Old People," call from him a reverence, humility and love which he feels only for Sam and the wilderness itself, of which Sam and the animals are representatives. Even when Ike would marry, Faulkner says, "Still the woods would be his mistress and wife" (326).

The animals of "The Bear" function in the story through a combination of mythic or heroic, and real (or ordinary, in terms of the readers
experience with real animals) qualities. Set in a world of an immense, though dying, wilderness, surrounded by small men, they act as the means through which the men can achieve wisdom and the prime Faulknerian virtues, which contact with nature offers. And for Ike, the animals become the means to a spiritual insight and eventual redemption. He rejects the guilt-ridden patrimony he was to inherit from his father as a result of what he had learned through his experiences which are related in "The Bear." Sam Fathers stands as a kind of priest, a spiritual father, to Ike, helping him to obtain the deepest possible knowledge of the wilderness and of the animals, their significance and meaning.

The depiction of the animals, in both their stature and symbolic functions, has its roots in classical mythology and rites of passage or initiation. The animals seem similar to certain pagan deities as, through contact with them, and through an understanding of their meaning, Isaac achieves manhood and a knowledge of the purpose of his existence.

The relationship of "The Bear" to the whole of Go Down, Moses is mainly a thematic one, although all the stories unite to tell the story of the McCaslin family and the country in which they live. Through his experiences with the bear and the wilderness, and Sam Fathers, who is his mentor and spiritual father, Ike acquires a set of values that result in his rejecting the patrimony of his father's estate (which rejection is dealt with in the fourth section of "The Bear"). This rejection is the culmination of the themes which have been presented in the stories preceding "The Bear." "Was" and "The Fire and the Hearth" portray the family history of the McCaslins', both white and Negro.
They introduce the problems of incest and miscegenation which burden
the McCaslin family. It is Ike's hatred of the injustice committed
by his grandfather against the Negro (which injustice has been per-
petrated, unwittingly perhaps, by succeeding McCaslins) that causes
Isaac to reject his patrimony descended to him, through his father,
from his grandfather. From Sam Fathers and Old Ben Ike had inherit-
ed a freedom of spirit which opposed the values represented by his
family's history.

"Pantalooin Black," although not a story about the McCaslin
family, is a story of passionate love in a character who represents
that simple and earthy nature which Sam Fathers partakes of, and pass-
es on to Ike. It offers the reader a poignant picture of a Negro,
one very much a human being (more so perhaps than the white men, like
the sheriff, who cannot understand that the Negro's wild actions are
a manifestation of an insupportable grief); the kind of human that
Isaac comes to see the Negro as being. It is this view that makes
the idea of Negro slavery and inferiority so repugnant to him. "Pant-
alooin in Black" is also one of the stories that presents the theme of
loss, which culminates in the destruction of the wilderness -- rep-
resented first by the death of the bear and Sam Fathers, and then
actually pictured in "Delta Autumn" -- of Ike's loss of that which
he loved best. The Negro's inability to comprehend and accept his
loss offers a contrast to Ike's acceptance of the passing of the wild-
erness, an acceptance he had learned from the wilderness itself.

"The Old People" is closely related to "The Bear." The characters
are the same in both; the great buck plays a role similar to Old Ben's.
The story deals with the process of Ike's initiation by Sam into the wilderness where he begins the education that will eventually result in his acquiring the values that lead him to reject his patrimony in an attempt to put a stop to the evils of Negro slavery which have been a part of his family's history.

"Delta Autumn" is a story of the Isaac of "The Bear" as an old man. It describes what has become of the wilderness during the fifty some years which have passed between the events related by the two stories. It tells of the ineffectuality of Isaac's sacrifice, of his attempt to curb the injustice to the Negroes which had been part of his inheritance from his family and which he had rejected when he refused to accept his patrimony. It also tells of his personal failure in dealing with Roth Edmond's mistress. The final story, "Go Down, Moses," offers a contrast to Ike's failure through Miss Worsham's effectual efforts to help and comfort Molly Beauchamp.

The part of "The Bear" which tells of Ike's experience with Old Ben can be seen as one of the strands weaving the story of Ike's act of rejecting his inheritance in an attempt to alleviate and rectify the injustice committed by his forefathers towards the Negro race.

"The knowledge of such depravity [i.e., incest] in his own family pierces deep into a spirit which had learned from Sam Fathers [and the bear and the wilderness itself, too] a conception of nature that amounts to the sacramental." His rejection is not only of the injustice of his family towards the Negro, but that of the whole South. Ike, in section 4 of "The Bear," when Cass suggests that the land is cursed because of slavery, says that the curse is not on the land, but
on the white men (298).

Go Down, Moses tells the story of individuals caught up in injustice and guilt. It is centered around Isaac's attempt to free himself, at least, from the curse, and to rectify, in some way, the injustice, by refusing to inherit it. He is heir to a finer, freer and more valuable patrimony, willed him by Sam and the bear.

The second example I have chosen of Faulkner's use of an animal-man relationship is taken from A Fable, in which there is the curious story of the theft of a race horse by its groom, a Negro minister (who is also a groom) and his twelve-year-old son.

This tale, which, for convenience sake, I shall call the "Theft Section" of A Fable, is told, half way through the novel itself, by the old Negro to a runner in the British army, who is one of the main characters of the whole work. The introduction to the story is given just before the Theft Section begins. The British runner is talking to the old Negro about the minister's relationship to an English sentry, who turns out to be the hero of the Theft Section. The Negro says he had come to see the sentry "to see if he needed money" (150), a statement which mystifies the runner because the sentry seems to be involved in the operation of a kind of bank that speculates on the war casualty list. The Negro makes the remark even more confusing by talking about a horse "that they claimed we stole. Except that we couldn't have stole it, even if we had wanted to. Because it never belonged to no man to be stolen from. It was the world's horse. The champion. No, that's wrong too. Things belonged to it, not it to things. Things
and people both. He did. I did. All three of us did before it was over" (150).

Then the Theft Section begins, as did "The Bear," with a statement of the existence of the characters around whom, or because of whom, the action takes place. The time is 1912, five years before the scene in which the runner listens to the retelling. The horse is a three-year-old race horse, "such a horse that even the price which the Argentine hide-and-wheat prince paid for it at the Newmarket sale, although an exceptional one, was not an outrageous one" (151). The horse had been bought from the Argentine by an American millionaire. The horse's groom, who had travelled from England to South America with the animal, also goes with it to America. "He [Harry] was not merely included in the sale of the horse, he was compelled into it. And not by the buyer nor even the seller, but by the sold: ... the horse itself, with an imperiousness not even to be temporised with, let alone denied. ... It was because there had developed apparently on sight between the man and the animal something which was no mere rapport but an affinity, not from understanding to understanding but from heart to heart and glands to glands. ..." (151-152).

The horse will let no other person come near it but the groom. Without the man's presence, Faulkner says, the horse becomes less than a horse, worthless, because it would not fulfill "the long careful breeding and selecting which finally produced it to be sold for the price it brought to perform the one rite for which it had been shaped ..." (152). It would not even run "until -- whatever the communication was: voice, touch, whatever -- the man had set it free" (152). The
horse, "before the groom came into its life, merely won races, but . . . after his advent, began to break records . . ." (152). Even after the horse is crippled in the train wreck, it continues to win races for the man.

One can see parallels between this relationship and the Boon-Lion relationship of "The Bear," But in this story, there is little or no subordination of man to beast, as is seen in the Boon-Lion affair. In both cases the relationship begins with the first meeting of the man and animal. Both are non-intellectual, emotional affinities: a response of "heart to heart." In the relationship between the groom and the horse, there is a sense of equality, the man having a mastery over the horse, and the horse possessing a power over the man. Without the man, the horse will not function as a horse, and the man cannot leave the animal. There is a sense of give and take, of a mutuality, that the Boon-Lion relationship does not have.

The difference between the horse-groom relationship, and the Boon-Lion relationship, becomes quite clear as Faulkner begins to explain the why of the theft; why the groom persisted in the crazy flight through the central United States with a crippled horse. It was, Faulkner says

... not a theft, but a passion, an immolation, an apotheosis — no gang of opportunists fleeing with a crippled horse whose value, even whole, had ceased weeks back to equal the sum spent on its pursuit, but the immortal pageant-piece of the tender legend which was the crowning glory of man's own legend beginning when his first paired children lost well the world and from which paired prototypes they still challenge paradise, still paired and still immortal against the chronicle's grimed and bloodstained pages: Adam and Lilith and Paris and Helen and Pyramus and