
Prüfungsteilnehmer

Prüfungstermin

Einzelprüfungsnummer

Kennzahl: _____

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**Herbst
2012**

62619

**Erste Staatsprüfung für ein Lehramt an öffentlichen Schulen
— Prüfungsaufgaben —**

Fach: **Englisch (vertieft studiert)**

Einzelprüfung: **Literaturwissenschaft**

Anzahl der gestellten Themen (Aufgaben): **7**

Anzahl der Druckseiten dieser Vorlage: **20**

Bitte wenden!

Thema Nr. 1

William Shakespeare, *Othello* (1603/04)

Akt 3, Szene 3

OTHELLO

[...] 'Tis not to make me jealous

To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,

Is free of speech, sings, plays and dances well:

Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.

Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw 190

The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt,

For she had eyes and chose me. No, Iago,

I'll see before I doubt, when I doubt, prove,

And on the proof there is no more but this:

Away at once with love or jealousy! 195

IAGO

I am glad of this, for now I shall have reason

To show the love and duty that I bear you

With franker spirit: therefore, as I am bound,

Receive it from me. I speak not yet of proof:

Look to your wife, observe her well with Cassio. 200

Wear your eyes thus, not jealous nor secure;

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

I would not have your free and noble nature

Out of *self-bounty be abused; look to't.

* [Neologismus] eigene Güte

I know our country disposition well –

In Venice they do let God see the *pranks

205 * Späße [hier sexuell]

They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience

Is not to leave'd undone, but keep't unknown.

OTHELLO

Dost thou say so?

IAGO

She did deceive her father, marrying you,

And when she seemed to shake, and fear your looks,

210

She loved them most.

OTHELLO

And so she did.

IAGO

Why, go to then:

She that so young could give out such a seeming

To seel her father's eyes up, close as oak –

He thought 'twas witchcraft. But I am much to blame,

I humbly do beseech you of your pardon

215

For too much loving you.

OTHELLO

I am bound to thee for ever.

[...]

OTHELLO [...]

I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

IAGO

Long live she so; and long live you to think so. 230

OTHELLO

And yet how nature, erring from itself –

IAGO

Ay, there's the point: as, to be bold with you,

Not to affect many proposed matches

Of her own clime, complexion and degree,

Whereto we see, in all things, nature tends – 235

Foh! one may smell in such a will most rank,

Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.

But pardon me, I do not in position

Distinctly speak of her, though I may fear

Her will, recoiling to her better judgement, 240

May fall to match you with her country forms,

And happily repent.

[...]

IAGO

I once more take my leave. *Exit.*

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

OTHELLO

This fellow's of exceeding honesty

And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,

Of human dealings. If I do prove her *haggard,

*wild, beim weibl. Falken (= unkeusch)

Though that her *jesses were my dear heart-strings,

265 *Beinschnüre eines zahmen Falken

I'd whistle her off and let her down the wind

To prey at fortune. Haply for I am black

And have not those soft parts of conversation

That chamberers have, or for I am declined

Into the vale of years – yet that's not much –

270

She's gone, I am abused, and my relief

Must be to loathe her. [...]

Text:

William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. E. A. J. Honigmann, The Arden Shakespeare (Walton-on-Thames: Thomson publishing, 1996)

Die Szene spielt zwischen dem dunkelhäutigen Othello, einem hochangesehenen General in Venedig, und seinem Adjutanten Iago, der ihm aus Rache die (erfundene) Untreue seiner weißen Ehefrau Desdemona mit Cassio suggerieren will.

1. Analysieren Sie den Auszug aus dem Dialog, indem Sie besonders Iagos taktisches Vorgehen sowie Othellos Prozess der Verunsicherung in den Blick nehmen! Beziehen Sie neben der rhetorischen auch eine stilistische Analyse ein!
2. Ein wichtiges Motiv ist Iagos Betonung des Unterschieds zwischen ‚Schein‘ und ‚Sein‘; diskutieren Sie dies vor dem Hintergrund der dramatischen Situation selbst: auch Iago spielt eine Rolle! Inwiefern benutzt Iago Othellos ethnische/kulturelle Differenz als Argument?
3. Situieren Sie das Stück im literaturhistorischen Kontext und ziehen Sie mindestens zwei Stücke aus der Zeit, in denen ethnische und kulturelle Differenz verhandelt werden, zu einem Vergleich heran!

Thema Nr. 2**I. Text**

Auszug aus Jonathan Fielding, *An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews* (1741)

Anmerkung:

Im ersten Brief informiert Shamela ihre Mutter, dass sie nach London kommen wird und dass Mrs Jervis sie voraussichtlich begleiten werde, "to keep a House somewhere about *Short's-Gardens*".

LETTER II.

SHAMELA ANDREWS to HENRIETTA MARIA HONORA ANDREWS.

Dear Mamma,

O WHAT News, since I writ my last! the young Squire hath been here, and as sure as a Gun he hath taken a Fancy to me; *Pamela*, says he, (for so I am called here) you was a great Favourite of your late Mistress's; yes, an't please your Honour, says I; and I believe you deserved it, says he; thank your Honour for your good Opinion, says I; and then he took me by the Hand, and I pretended to be shy: Laud, says I, Sir, I hope you don't intend to be rude; no, says he, my Dear; and then he kissed me, 'till he took away my Breath—and I pretended to be Angry, and to get away, and then he kissed me again, and breathed very short, and looked very silly; and by Ill-Luck Mrs. *Jervis* came in, and had like to have spoiled Sport.—*How troublesome is such Interruption!* You shall hear now soon, for I shall not come away yet, so I rest,

Your affectionate Daughter,

SHAMELA.

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

LETTER III.

HENRIETTA MARIA HONORA ANDREWS to SHAMELA ANDREWS.

Dear Sham,

YOUR last Letter hath put me into a great hurry of Spirits, for you have a very difficult Part to act. I hope you will remember your Slip with Parson *Williams*, and not be guilty of any more such Folly. Truly, a Girl who hath once known what is what, is in the highest Degree inexcusable if she respects her *Digressions*; but a Hint of this is sufficient. When Mrs. *Jervis* thinks of coming to Town, I believe I can procure her a good House, and fit for the Business, so I am,

Your affectionate Mother,
HENRIETTA MARIA HONORA ANDREWS.

LETTER IV.

SHAMELA ANDREWS to HENRIETTA MARIA HONORA ANDREWS.

MARRY come up, good Madam, the Mother had never looked into the Oven for her Daughter, if she had not been there herself. I shall never have done if you upbraid me with having had a small One by *Arthur Williams*, when you yourself—but I say no more. *O! What fine Times when the Kettle calls the Pot.* Let me do what I will, I say my Prayers as often as another, and I read in good Books, as often as I have Leisure; and Parson *William* says, that will make amends.—So no more, but I rest

Your afflicted Daughter,

S_____.

II. Aufgabenstellung

1. Analysieren Sie die Charakterisierung Shamelas und gehen Sie dabei insbesondere auf verschiedene Methoden der Selbst- und Fremdcharakterisierung ein!
2. Diskutieren Sie auf der Basis des Textausschnitts die Funktion(en) der Briefform als Erzählstrategie!
3. Ordnen Sie Jonathan Fieldings 1741 erschienenen Briefroman *Shamela* in die Entwicklung der Gattung ‚Briefroman‘ im 18. Jahrhundert ein!

Quelle:

Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews and Shamela* (Hg. Douglas Brooks, London: Oxford University Press, 1971), S. 326 - 327)

Thema Nr. 3

Der beigefügte Textausschnitt ist der Anfang des Stücks *Endgame*, das der irische Erzähler und Dramatiker Samuel Beckett (1906 - 1989) zunächst unter dem Titel *Fin de partie* 1957 auf Französisch veröffentlichte, im Jahr darauf in englischer Fassung.

1. Analysieren Sie zunächst die Kommunikation der beiden Figuren in dieser Passage und erörtern insbesondere, was für sprachliche Mittel und Strategien hier zum Einsatz kommen!
2. Diskutieren Sie sodann die außersprachlichen Elemente der theatralen Interaktion, die im vorliegenden Bühnenskript deutlich werden und interpretieren Sie deren Funktion!
3. Was für Möglichkeiten für den Fortgang dieses Bühnenstückes bietet die Eröffnung und wie lässt es sich im weiteren Feld des Dramas und Theaters nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg einordnen?

Bare interior.

Grey Light.

Left and right back, high up, two small windows, curtains drawn.

Front right, a door. Hanging near door, its face to wall, a picture.

Front left, touching each other, covered with an old sheet, two ashbins.

Center, in an armchair on castors, covered with an old sheet, Hamm.

Motionless by the door, his eyes fixed on Hamm, Clov. Very red face.

Brief tableau.

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

Clov goes and stands under window left. Stiff, staggering walk. He looks up at window left. He turns and looks at window right. He goes and stands under window right. He looks up at window right. He turns and looks at window left. He goes out, comes back immediately with a small step-ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window left, gets up on it, draws back curtain. He gets down, takes six steps (for example) towards window right, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window right, gets up on it, draws back curtain. He gets down, takes three steps towards window left, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window left, gets up on it, looks out of window. Brief laugh. He gets down, takes one step towards window right, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window right, gets up on it, looks out of window. Brief laugh. He gets down, goes with ladder towards ashbins, halts, turns, carries back ladder and sets it down under window right, goes to ashbins, removes sheet covering them, folds it over his arm. He raises one lid, stoops and looks into bin. Brief laugh. He closes lid. Same with other bin. He goes to Hamm, removes sheet covering him, folds it over his arm. In a dressing-gown, a stiff toque on his head, a large blood-stained handkerchief over his face, a whistle hanging from his neck, a rug over his knees, thick socks on his feet, Hamm seems to be asleep. Clov looks him over. Brief laugh. He goes to door, halts, turns towards auditorium.

CLOV (*fixed gaze, tonelessly*):

Finished, it's finished, nearly finished, it must be nearly finished.

(*Pause.*)

Grain upon grain, one by one, and one day, suddenly, there's a heap, a little heap, the impossible heap.

(*Pause.*)

I can't be punished any more.

(*Pause.*)

I'll go now to my kitchen, ten feet by ten feet by ten feet, and wait for him to whistle me.

(*Pause.*)

Nice dimensions, nice proportions, I'll lean on the table, and look at the wall, and wait for him to whistle me.

(*He remains a moment motionless, then goes out. He comes back immediately, goes to window right, takes up the ladder and carries it out. Pause. Hamm stirs. He yawns under the handkerchief. He removes the handkerchief from his face. Very red face. Glasses with black lenses.*)

HAMM:

Me—

(*he yawns*)

—to play.

(*He takes off his glasses, wipes his eyes, his face, the glasses, puts them on again, folds the handkerchief and puts it back neatly in the breast pocket of his dressing gown. He clears his throat, joins the tips of his fingers.*)

Can there be misery—

(*he yawns*)

—loftier than mine? No doubt. Formerly. But now?

(*Pause.*)

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

My father?

(Pause.)

My mother?

(Pause.)

My... dog?

(Pause.)

Oh I am willing to believe they suffer as much as such creatures can suffer. But does that mean their sufferings equal mine? No doubt.

(Pause.)

No, all is a—

(he yawns)

—bsolute,

(proudly)

the bigger a man is the fuller he is.

(Pause. Gloomily.)

And the emptier.

(He sniffs.)

Clov!

(Pause.)

No, alone.

(Pause.)

What dreams! Those forests!

(Pause.)

Enough, it's time it ended, in the shelter, too.

(Pause.)

And yet I hesitate, I hesitate to... to end. Yes, there it is, it's time it ended and yet I hesitate to—

(He yawns.)

—to end.

(Yawns.)

God, I'm tired, I'd be better off in bed.

(He whistles. Enter Clov immediately. He halts beside the chair.)

You pollute the air!

(Pause.)

Get me ready, I'm going to bed.

CLOV:

I've just got you up.

HAMM:

And what of it?

CLOV:

I can't be getting you up and putting you to bed every five minutes, I have things to do.

(Pause.)

HAMM:

Did you ever see my eyes?

CLOV:

No.

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

HAMM:

Did you never have the curiosity, while I was sleeping, to take off my glasses and look at my eyes?

CLOV:

Pulling back the lids?

(Pause.)

No.

HAMM:

One of these days I'll show them to you.

(Pause.)

It seems they've gone all white.

(Pause.)

What time is it?

CLOV:

The same as usual.

HAMM (*gesture towards window right*):

Have you looked?

CLOV:

Yes.

HAMM:

Well?

CLOV:

Zero.

HAMM:

It'd need to rain.

CLOV:

It won't rain.

(Pause.)

HAMM:

Apart from that, how do you feel?

CLOV:

I don't complain.

HAMM:

You feel normal?

CLOV (*irritably*):

I tell you I don't complain.

HAMM:

I feel a little strange.

(Pause.)

Clov!

CLOV:

Yes.

HAMM:

Have you not had enough?

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

Thema Nr. 4**Philip Larkin, Church Going**

Philip Larkin, *The Less Deceived*. Hull: The Marvell Press, 1955.

Once I am sure there's nothing going on 1
I step inside, letting the door thud shut.
Another church: matting, seats, and stone,
And little books; sprawlings of flowers, cut
For Sunday, brownish now; some brass and stuff 5
Up at the holy end; the small neat organ;
And a tense, musty, unignorable silence,
Brewed God knows how long. Hatless, I take off
My cycle-clips in awkward reverence.

Move forward, run my hand around the font. 10
From where I stand, the roof looks almost new -
Cleaned, or restored? Someone would know: I don't.
Mounting the lectern, I peruse a few
Hectoring large-scale verses, and pronounce
'Here endeth' much more loudly than I'd meant. 15

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

The echoes snigger briefly. Back at the door
 I sign the book, donate an Irish sixpence,
 Reflect the place was not worth stopping for.

Yet stop I did: in fact I often do,
 And always end much at a loss like this, 20
 Wondering what to look for; wondering, too,
 When churches will fall completely out of use
 What we shall turn them into, if we shall keep
 A few cathedrals chronically on show,
 Their parchment, plate and pyx in locked cases, 25
 And let the rest rent-free to rain and sheep.
 Shall we avoid them as unlucky places?

Or, after dark, will dubious women come
 To make their children touch a particular stone;
 Pick simples for a cancer; or on some 30
 Advised night see walking a dead one?
 Power of some sort will go on
 In games, in riddles, seemingly at random;
 But superstition, like belief, must die,
 And what remains when disbelief has gone? 35
 Grass, weedy pavement, brambles, buttress, sky,

A shape less recognisable each week,
 A purpose more obscure. I wonder who
 Will be the last, the very last, to seek
 This place for what it was; one of the crew 40
 That tap and jot and know what rood-lofts were?
 Some ruin-bibber, randy for antique,
 Or Christmas-addict, counting on a whiff
 Of gown-and-bands and organ-pipes and myrrh?
 Or will he be my representative, 45

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

Bored, uninformed, knowing the ghostly silt
 Dispersed, yet tending to this cross of ground
 Through suburb scrub because it held unspilt
 So long and equably what since is found
 Only in separation - marriage, and birth, 50
 And death, and thoughts of these - for which was built
 This special shell? For, though I've no idea
 What this accoutred frowsty barn is worth,
 It pleases me to stand in silence here;

A serious house on serious earth it is, 55
 In whose blent air all our compulsions meet,
 Are recognized, and robed as destinies.
 And that much never can be obsolete,
 Since someone will forever be surprising
 A hunger in himself to be more serious, 60
 And gravitating with it to this ground,
 Which, he once heard, was proper to grow wise in,
 If only that so many dead lie round. 63

1. Interpretieren Sie das Gedicht unter Berücksichtigung von Aufbau, Metrik, Wortwahl und Stilmitteln!
2. Wie werden gegenwärtige Situation und Zukunftsaussichten der Kirchen - als Institutionen wie als Gebäude - eingeschätzt?
3. Das Gedicht gilt als typisch für die englische Lyrik der Nachkriegszeit. Erörtern Sie dies mit Bezug auf literarische sowie politisch-gesellschaftliche Entwicklungen in Großbritannien nach 1945!

Thema Nr. 5

1. Analysieren Sie die formalen, sprachlichen und stilistischen Elemente des Gedichts!
2. Diskutieren Sie mit Bezug auf zwei weitere Autor/innen das Verhältnis von Naturerfahrung und Technik!
3. Situieren Sie das Werk von Walt Whitman im literatur- und kulturhistorischen Umfeld der „American Renaissance“!

Walt Whitman, „To a Locomotive in Winter“ (1881)

TO A LOCOMOTIVE IN WINTER

Thee for my recitative,
 Thee in the driving storm even as now, the snow, the winter-day
 declining,
 Thee in thy panoply, thy measur'd dual throbbing and thy beat
 convulsive,
 Thy black cylindric body, golden brass and silvery steel,
 Thy ponderous side-bars, parallel and connecting rods, gyrating,
 shuttling at thy sides,
 Thy metrical, now swelling pant and roar, now tapering in the
 distance,
 Thy great protruding head-light fix'd in front,
 Thy long, pale, floating vapor-pennants, tinged with delicate purple,
 The dense and murky clouds out-belching from thy smoke-stack,
 Thy knitted frame, thy springs and valves, the tremulous twinkle of
 thy wheels,
 Thy train of cars behind, obedient, merrily following,
 Through gale or calm, now swift, now slack, yet steadily careering;
 Type of the modern—emblem of motion and power—pulse of the
 continent,
 For once come serve the Muse and merge in verse, even as here I
 see thee,
 With storm and buffeting gusts of wind and falling snow,
 By day thy warning ringing bell to sound its notes,
 By night thy silent signal lamps to swing.

 Fierce-throated beauty!
 Roll through my chant with all thy lawless music, thy swinging lamps
 at night,
 Thy madly-whistled laughter, echoing, rumbling like an earthquake
 rousing all,
 Law of thyself complete, thine own track firmly holding,
 (No sweetness debonair of tearful harp or glib piano thine,)

Thy trills of shrieks by rocks and hills return'd,
 Launch'd o'er the prairies wide, across the lakes,
 To the free skies unpent and glad and strong.

Thema Nr. 6

Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar" (1837)

Ralph Waldo Emersons zunächst am 31. August 1837 als Rede vor der Phi Beta Kappa Society der Harvard University konzipierter Essay definiert die Rolle des amerikanischen Intellektuellen vor dem Hintergrund einer sich diversifizierenden Gesellschaft:

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

I greet you on the re-commencement of our literary year. Our anniversary is one of hope, and, perhaps, not enough of labor. . . . Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the ^{scarcely} sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp which now flames in our zenith, astronomers announce, shall one day be the pole-star for a thousand years.

5

In the light of this hope, I accept the topic which not only usage, but the nature of our association, seem to prescribe to this day, - the AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Year by year, we come up hither to read one more chapter of his biography. Let us inquire what new lights, new events and more days have thrown on his character, his duties and his hopes.

10

It is one of those fables, which out of an unknown antiquity, convey an unlooked for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself; just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end.

The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime; that there is One Man,- present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty; and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier. In the *divided* or social state, these functions are parcelled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his. The fable implies that the individual to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers. But unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely subdivided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops, and cannot be gathered. The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,- a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

15

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Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney, a statute-book; the mechanic, a machine, the sailor, a rope of a ship. **Fortsetzung nächste Seite!**

30

In this distribution of functions, the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state, he is, *Man Thinking*. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or, still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking. . . .

35

In life, too often, the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school, and consider him in reference to main influences he receives. . . .

The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and, after sunset, night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar must needs stand wistful and admiring before this great spectacle. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning to itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending he never can find – so entire, so boundless. . . .

40

45

Thus to him, to this school-boy under the bending dome of day, is suggested, that he and it proceed from one root; one is leaf and one is flower; relation, sympathy, stirring in every vein. And what is that Root? Is not that the soul of his soul? – A thought too bold - a dream too wild. Yet when this spiritual light shall have revealed the law of more earthly natures, - when he has learned to worship the soul, and to see that the natural philosophy that now is, is only the first gropings of its gigantic hand, he shall look forward to an ever expanding knowledge as to a becoming creator. He shall see that nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal, and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself," and the modern precept, "Study nature," become at last one maxim.

50

55

Quelle: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Ed. Nina Baym. Fifth Ed. Vol. I. New York: Norton, 1998. 1101-1103.

Wörterklärungen: ¹sere: dried up, withered; ²to forfeit: to lose, to give up.

Aufgaben:

1. Charakterisieren Sie den Text stilistisch in Bezug auf rhetorischen Duktus, Argumentationsstrategien und Bildlichkeit!
2. Analysieren Sie das Menschenbild Emersons, das seiner Sicht des Intellektuellen zugrunde liegt!
3. Charakterisieren Sie anhand des Textes die Weltsicht, in der dieses Menschenbild eingebettet ist!
4. Gehen Sie auf weitere Texte der amerikanischen Literatur dieser Epoche ein, in denen Sie Varianten oder Gegenbilder von Emersons Auffassungen erkennen!

Thema Nr. 7

William Faulkner, „Dry September“

1. Wie werden die in dieser Passage auftretenden Figuren charakterisiert?
2. Analysieren Sie Dialog und Verhalten!
3. Kommentieren Sie Sprache, Stil und Erzählweise!
4. Beziehen Sie die Szene auf die südstaatliche Kultur im frühen 20. Jahrhundert!

WILLIAM FAULKNER

Dry September

THROUGH THE BLOODY September twilight, aftermath of sixty-two rainless days, it had gone like a fire in dry grass—the rumor, the story, whatever it was. Something about Miss Minnie Cooper and a Negro. Attacked, insulted, frightened: none of them, gathered in the barber shop on that Saturday evening where the ceiling fan stirred, without freshening it, the vitiated air, sending back upon them, in recurrent surges of stale pomade and lotion, their own stale breath and odors, knew exactly what had happened.

“Except it wasn’t Will Mayes,” a barber said. He was a man of middle age; a thin, sand-colored man with a mild face, who was shaving a client. “I know Will Mayes. He’s a good nigger. And I know Miss Minnie Cooper, too.”

“What do you know about her?” a second barber said.

“Who is she?” the client said. “A young girl?”

“No,” the barber said. “She’s about forty, I reckon. She aint married. That’s why I dont believe—”

“Believe, hell!” a hulking youth in a sweat-stained silk shirt said. “Wont you take a white woman’s word before a nigger’s?”

“I dont believe Will Mayes did it,” the barber said. “I know Will Mayes.”

“Maybe you know who did it, then. Maybe you already got him out of town, you damn niggerlover.”

“I dont believe anybody did anything. I dont believe anything happened. I leave it to you fellows if them ladies that get old without getting married dont have notions that a man cant—”

“Then you are a hell of a white man,” the client said. He moved under the cloth. The youth had sprung to his feet.

“You dont?” he said. “Do you accuse a white woman of lying?”

The barber held the razor poised above the half-risen client. He did not look around.

“It’s this durn weather,” another said. “It’s enough to make a man do anything. Even to her.”

Nobody laughed. The barber said in his mild, stubborn tone: “I aint accusing nobody of nothing. I just know and you fellows know how a woman that never—”

“You damn niggerlover!” the youth said.

Fortsetzung nächste Seite!

"Shut up, Butch," another said. "We'll get the facts in plenty of time to act."

"Who is? Who's getting them?" the youth said. "Facts, hell! I—"

"You're a fine white man," the client said. "Aint you?" In his frothy beard he looked like a desert rat in the moving pictures. "You tell them, Jack," he said to the youth. "If there aint any white men in this town, you can count on me, even if I aint only a drummer and a stranger."

"That's right, boys," the barber said. "Find out the truth first. I know Will Mayes."

"Well, by God!" the youth shouted. "To think that a white man in this town—"

"Shut up, Butch," the second speaker said. "We got plenty of time."

The client sat up. He looked at the speaker. "Do you claim that anything excuses a nigger attacking a white woman? Do you mean to tell me you are a white man and you'll stand for it? You better go back North where you came from. The South dont want your kind here."

"North what?" the second said. "I was born and raised in this town."

"Well, by God!" the youth said. He looked about with a strained, baffled gaze, as if he was trying to remember what it was he wanted to say or to do. He drew his sleeve across his sweating face. "Damn if I'm going to let a white woman—"

"You tell them, Jack," the drummer said. "By God, if they—"

The screen door crashed open. A man stood in the floor, his feet apart and his heavy-set body poised easily. His white shirt was open at the throat; he wore a felt hat. His hot, bold glance swept the group. His name was McLendon. He had commanded troops at the front in France and had been decorated for valor.

"Well," he said, "are you going to sit there and let a black son rape a white woman on the streets of Jefferson?"

Butch sprang up again. The silk of his shirt clung flat to his heavy shoulders. At each armpit was a dark halfmoon. "That's what I been telling them! That's what I—"

"Did it really happen?" a third said. "This aint the first man scare she ever had, like Hawkshaw says. Wasn't there something about a man on the kitchen roof, watching her undress, about a year ago?"

"What?" the client said. "What's that?" The barber had been slowly forcing him back into the chair; he arrested himself reclining, his head lifted, the barber still pressing him down.

McLendon whirled on the third speaker. "Happen? What the hell difference does it make? Are you going to let the black sons get away with it until one really does it?"

"That's what I'm telling them!" Butch shouted. He cursed, long and steady, pointless.

"Here, here," a fourth said. "Not so loud. Dont talk so loud."

"Sure," McLendon said; "no talking necessary at all. I've done my talking. Who's with me?" He poised on the balls of his feet, roving his gaze.

The barber held the drummer's face down, the razor poised. "Find out the facts first, boys. I know Willy Mayes. It wasn't him. Let's get the sheriff and do this thing right."

McLendon whirled upon him his furious, rigid face. The barber did not look away. They looked like men of different races. The other barbers had ceased also above their prone clients. "You mean to tell me," McLendon said, "that you'd take a nigger's word before a white woman's? Why, you damn niggerloving—"

The third speaker rose and grasped McLendon's arm; he too had been a soldier. "Now, now. Let's figure this thing out. Who knows anything about what really happened?"

"Figure out hell!" McLendon jerked his arm free. "All that're with me get up from there. The ones that aint—" He roved his gaze, dragging his sleeve across his face.

Faulkner, William: „Dry September.“
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