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## **Dangers of the Wishing Tree: William Faulkner’s Modernist Fantasy for Children**

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### **Abstract**

The article considers the motif of renunciation in *The Wishing Tree* (1927), the only children’s story known to have been created by William Faulkner. *The Wishing Tree* is studied in the broad context of Faulkner’s creative work of the late 1920s. The article touches upon the biographical context, the addressees of the story in particular. The article also investigates the parallels between *The Wishing Tree* and *Mayday* (1926), another example of young Faulkner’s “fantasy fiction,” a “fable” about a young knight’s quest for love. It is argued that *The Wishing Tree* suggests “a children’s adaptation” of *Mayday*’s central motif of renunciation. The dreamlike nature of the plot provides parallels with *Alice in Wonderland*, yet the whole range of allusions is rather peculiar: Maeterlinck’s symbolist dramas, James Branch Cabell’s fantasy novels, etc. However, specific attention is devoted to the modernist representations of a “wishing land.” The final part of the article is devoted to the opposition of desire and renunciation in *The Sound and the Fury* and *The Wishing Tree*.

**Keywords:** *William Faulkner, children's fiction, modernism, renunciation, didacticism*