Sarty Changes In Barn Burning

In William Faulkn?r's story, 'Barn Burning', w? find Sarty, a young man who struggl?s with th? r?lationship h? has with his fath?r and himself. W? s?? Sarty, th? young man, d?v?lop into an adult whil? d?aling with th? many crud? actions and ways of Abn?r, his fath?r. W? s?? Sarty as a puzzl?d youth that fac?s th? qu?stions of faithfuln?ss to his fath?r or faithfuln?ss to hims?lf and th? soci?ty h? liv?s in. His struggl? d?aling with th? r?actions that ar? caus?d by his fath?r's action r?sult in him thinking mor? for hims?lf as th? story progr?ss?s.

Faulkn?r's 'Barn Burning' is a charact?r-driv?n story, as what mov?s it forward is Sarty's int?rnal growth as a charact?r. W? s?? him b?gin as a young child with strong trust in his b?lov?d fath?r and ?nd as a young boy b?ginning to think for hims?lf and d?v?lop a s?ns? of ind?p?nd?nc? and grow into a strong?r charact?r.

Sarty's fath?r is a chall?nging charact?r to lik?. H? is rud?, viol?nt, and argum?ntativ?, traits r?v?al?d in his b?havior throughout th? story. H? rud?ly and int?ntionally wip?s his dirty sho?s on d? Spain's rug, argu?s ov?r th? f?? h? must pay for th? damag? h?'s caus?d, th?n att?mpts to burn d? Spain's barn in a fit of spit?. Throughout this progr?ssion of ?v?nts, Sarty is fac?d with a difficult choic?: r?main loyal to his fath?r and com? to th? man's d?f?ns? or sp?ak out. Initially, th? boy r?mains sil?nt. H? insists in court that his fath?r is innoc?nt of burning Mr. Harris's barn (an ?arli?r off?ns? w? don't witn?ss but non?th?l?ss ar? l?d to b?li?v? Mr. Snop?s is guilty of by th? ?nd of th? story), d?spit? b?ing bulli?d by his p??rs ov?r th? matt?r and th? incr?asing ?vid?nc? that his fath?r is a criminal.

At th? b?ginning of th? story h? spok? as a child watching and looking at th? things around him. Sarty's lack of languag? signifi?s his v?n?rability th?, 't?rribl? handicap of b?ing young'(Ford). H? said that an ?n?my of his fath?rs was 'our ?n?my' and spok? with th? loyalty of a lamb, n?v?r knowing that it could stray from th? flock (Faulkn?r 156). N?ar th? middl? of th? story, w? can s?? th? ton? of his sp??ch chang?. Sarty shows chang? wh?n h? asks his fath?r if h? 'want’s to rid? now?' wh?n they are l?aving d? Spain's hous? (Faulkn?r 159). H? s??ms to hav? th? courag? to ask his dad c?rtain things, not f?aring th? cons?qu?nc?s. At th? ?nd of th? story, th? languag? Sarty us?s b?com?s cl?ar?r and mor? ind?p?nd?nt. Sarty struggl?s with a s?ns? of guilt for b?traying his fath?r; amidst his gri?f, th? young boy r?fin?s th?ir r?lationship by r?placing th? ?nd?aring cry of 'Pap, Pap!' with th? formal cry of 'Fath?r, Fath?r!'(Ford). H? shows his d?v?lopm?nt through th?s? ?xampl?s of his sp??ch.

In William Faulkn?r's 'Barn Burning,' th? charact?r Sarty ?xp?ri?nc?s gr?at growth throughout th? story. H? b?gins as a child who is f?arful of his fath?r--both disappointing him and incurring his wrath and viol?nc?. H? is willing to li? to a judg? to prot?ct his fath?r and r?main loyal to his family. As th? story progr?ss?s, and particularly wh?n Sarty s??s his fath?r d?lib?rat?ly, maliciously soil th? d? Spain's whit? rug, h? r?aliz?s that his fath?r will n?v?r chang? and if h?'s not car?ful, h? will turn into his fath?r on? day. It is at this mom?nt, that Sarty r?aliz?s that h? must mak? a choic? b?tw??n his own int?grity and loyalty to his fath?r.

H? choos?s int?grity--at th? cost of losing his family. Wh?n h? al?rts th? d? Spain's that his fath?r has s?t fir? to th? barn, h? irr?vocably chang?s th? cours? of his lif?. Shots ar? fir?d and

his fath?r and broth?r ar? probably kill?d; now that h? has b?tray?d his family, Sarty has no choic? but to run away. Th? final sc?n? of this coming of ag? story shows Sarty walking away, with th? s?ns? that h? will b? b?tt?r off and has mad? th? right d?cision.

Abn?r is a t?nant farm?r r?s?ntful of th? w?althy landown?rs for whom h? works. H? ?xpr?ss?s this r?s?ntm?nt by striking back at th?m in ways that rang? from p?tty larc?ny and bad work habits to s?tting fir?s. H? r?b?ls not only against th? social conv?ntions and in?qualiti?s of th? Old South, but also th? s?ns? of community and loyalty that w?r? part of th? south?rn ?thos.

Wh?n th? family b?gins to work for Major d? Spain, Sarty g?ts a s?ns? of a lif?, that of th? Old South and its traditions, which is mor? gracious and p?ac?ful than th? on? his fath?r liv?s, and also b?gins to slowly work out his own s?ns? of ?thics. Wh?n his fath?r pr?par?s to s?t Major d? Spain's barn on fir?, h? runs away from his moth?r to al?rt th? Major, solidifying his all?gianc? to th? valu?s of th? Old South.

By th? ?nd of th? story, Sarty finally br?aks away from his childish d?f?ns? of his fath?r. Th? last straw is wh?n his fath?r att?mpts to burn d? Spain's barn down out of spit?. Th? boy runs to d? Spain, conf?ss?s his fath?r is a barn-burn?r, and ?scap?s to th? woods just as h? h?ars gunshots that pr?sumably signal his fath?r's d?ath, though th? story n?v?r mak?s this c?rtain. W? ar? l?ft with th? imag? of poor Sarty waking up p?ac?fully in th? woods, alon?, away from th? chaos of his fath?r, and r?markably calm. By this point, th? boy has mad? a tr?m?ndous l?ap in his d?v?lopm?nt as a fr?? think?r and a brav?r, bold?r individual. H? no long?r blindly clings to his fath?r lik? a child but inst?ad is abl? to s?? his fath?r's tru? charact?r and brav?ly br?ak away from a toxic r?lationship. Sarty's charact?r growth is thus not just in maturity but also in grit. Informing d? Spain of his fath?r's barn-burning plans is a brav? act that th? Sarty in th? b?ginning of th? story would hav? b??n incapabl? of.

Works cit?d

1. Nicol?t, William P. 'Faulkn?r's Barn Burning.' ?xplicator 34.3 (1975).