

Characters:

Scout	Heck Tate	Bob Ewell	Reverend Sykes	Narrator 2
Jem	Judge Taylor	Mayella Ewell	Link Deas	Narrator 1
Dill	Clerk	Mr. Gilmer	Dolphus Raymond	Tom Robinson
Reporter	Atticus Finch			

Chapter 17

Scout: Jem, are those the Ewells sittin' down yonder

Jem :Hush, Mr. Heck Tate's testifyin'.

Narrator 1: Mr. Tate had dressed for the occasion. He wore an ordinary business suit, which made him look somehow like every other man: gone were his high boots, lumber jacket, and bullet-studded belt. From that moment he ceased to terrify me. He was sitting forward in the witness chair, his hands clasped between his knees, listening attentively to the circuit solicitor.

Gilmer: in your own words, Mr. Tate

Tate: Well, I was called--'

Gilmer: Could you say it to the jury, Mr. Tate? Thank you. Who called you?

Tate: I was fetched by Bob-by Mr. Bob Ewell yonder, one night..."

Gilmer: What night, sir?

Tate: It was the night of November twenty first. I was just leaving my office to go home when Mr. Ewell came in, very excited he was, and said get out to his house quick, some nigger'd raped his girl . Got in the car and went out as fast as I could."

Gilmer: And what did you find?

Tate: Found her lying on the floor in the middle of the front room, one on the right as you go in. She was pretty well beat up, but I heaved her to her feet and she washed her face in a bucket in the corner and said she was all right. I asked her who hurt her and she said it was Tom Robinson...

Narrator 2: Judge Taylor, who had been concentrating on his fingernails, looked up as if he were expecting an objection, but Atticus was quiet.

Tate: I asked her if he beat her like that, she said yes he had. Asked her if he took advantage of her and she said yes he did. So I went down to Robinson's house and brought him back. She identified him as the one, so I took him in. That's all there was to it.

Gilmer: Thank you

Judge: Any questions, Atticus?

Atticus: Yes, Did you call a doctor, Sheriff? Did anybody call a doctor?"

Tate: No sir,

Atticus: Didn't call a doctor?

Tate: No sir

Atticus: (*with an edge*) Why not?

Tate: Well I can tell you why I didn't. It wasn't necessary, Mr. Finch. She was mighty banged up. Something sho' happened, it was obvious.

Atticus: but you didn't call a doctor? While you were there did anyone send for one, fetch one, carry her to one?

Tate: No sir.

Judge: He's answered the question three times, Atticus. He didn't call a doctor.

Atticus: I just wanted to make sure, Judge (*pause*) Sheriff, you say she was mighty banged up. In what way?

Tate: Well-

Atticus: Just describe her injuries, Heck.

Tate: Well, she was beaten around the head. There was already bruises comin' on her arms, and it happened about thirty minutes before...

Atticus: How do you know?

Tate: Sorry, that's what they said. Anyway, she was pretty bruised up when I got there, and she had a black eye comin'.

Atticus: Which eye?

Tate: Let's see

Atticus: Can't you remember?

Tate: Her left.

Atticus: Wait a minute, Sheriff, Was it her left facing you or her left looking the same way you were?

Tate: Oh yes, that'd make it her right. It was her right eye, Mr. Finch. I remember now, she was bunged up on that side of her face. . . .

Atticus: Sheriff, please repeat what you said.

Tate: It was her right eye, I said.

Atticus: No . . . *(walks over to the court reporter)*

Court Reporter: Mr. Finch. I remember now she was bunged up on that side of the face.

Atticus: Which side again, Heck?

Heck: The right side, Mr. Finch, but she had more bruises, you wanta hear about 'em?

Narrator 1: Atticus seemed to be bordering on another question, but he thought better of it.

Atticus: Yes, what were her other injuries? *(Atticus looks at Tom Robinson as if to say this was something they hadn't bargained for).*

Heck: . . . her arms were bruised, and she showed me her neck. There were definite finger marks on her gullet...

Atticus: All around her throat? At the back of her neck?

Heck: I'd say they were all around, Mr. Finch.

Atticus: You would?

Heck: Yes sir, she had a small throat, anybody could'a reached around it with -

Atticus: Just answer the question yes or no, please, Sheriff.

Narrator 2: Atticus sat down and nodded to the circuit solicitor, who shook his head at the judge, who nodded to Mr. Tate, who rose stiffly and stepped down from the witness stand. So far, things were utterly dull: nobody had thundered, there were no arguments between opposing counsel, there was no drama; a grave disappointment to all present, it seemed. Atticus was proceeding amiably, as if he were involved in a title dispute. With his infinite capacity for calming turbulent seas, he could make a rape case as dry as a sermon.

Clerk: Robert E. Lee Ewell!

Bob: -so help me God

Narrator 1: Every town the size of Maycomb had families like the Ewells. No economic fluctuations changed their status people like the Ewells lived as guests of the county in prosperity as well as in the depths of a depression. No truant officers could keep their numerous offspring in school; no public health officer could free them from congenital defects, various worms, and the diseases indigenous to filthy surroundings. Maycomb's Ewells lived behind the town garbage dump in what was once a Negro cabin. One corner of the yard, though, bewildered Maycomb.

Narrator 2: Against the fence, in a line, were six chipped-enamel slop jars holding brilliant red geraniums, cared for as tenderly as if they belonged to Miss Maudie Atkinson, had Miss Maudie deigned to permit a geranium on her premises. People said they were Mayella Ewell's. Nobody was quite sure how many children were on the place. Some people said six, others said nine; there were always several dirty-faced ones at the windows when anyone passed by.

Gilmer: Mr. Robert Ewell?

Bob: That's m'name, cap'n

Gilmer: Are you the father of Mayella Ewell?

Bob: Well, if I ain't I can't do nothing about it now, her ma's dead.

Judge: *(sternly)* Are you the father of Mayella Ewell

Bob - *(meekly)* Yes sir.

Judge: This the first time you've ever been in court? I don't recall ever seeing you here.

(Bob nods)

Judge: Well, let's get something straight. There will be no more audibly obscene speculations on any subject from anybody in this courtroom as long as I'm sitting here. Do you understand?

(Bob nods again)

Judge: All right, Mr. Gilmer?

Gilmer: Thank you, sir. Mr. Ewell, would you tell us in your own words what happened on the evening of November twenty-first, please?

Bob: Well, the night of November twenty-one I was comin' in from the woods with a load o'kindlin' and just as I got to the fence I heard Mayella screamin' like a stuck hog inside the house.

Gilmer: What time was it, Mr. Ewell?

Bob: Just 'fore sundown. Well, I was sayin' Mayella was screamin' fit to beat Jesus-

Gilmer: Yes? She was screaming?

Bob: Well, Mayella was raisin' this holy racket so I dropped m'load and run as fast as I could but I run into th' fence, but when I got distangled I run up to th' window and I seen— *(Bob stands up and points at Tom Robinson)* Mr. Ewell's face grew scarlet. I seen that black nigger yonder ruttin' on my Mayella!

(Judge Taylor hammers his gavel)

Reverend Sykes: Mr. Jem, you better take Miss Jean Louise home. Mr. Jem, you hear me?

Jem: Scout, go home. Dill, you'n' Scout go home.

Scout: You gotta make me first

Jem: I think it's okay, Reverend, she doesn't understand it.

Scout: *(offended)* I most certainly do, I c'n understand anything you can.

Jem: Aw hush. She doesn't understand it, Reverend, she ain't nine yet.

Reverend Sykes: Mr. Finch know you all are here? This ain't fit for Miss Jean Louise or you boys either.

Jem: He can't see us this far away. It's all right, Reverend.

Judge: There has been a request that this courtroom be cleared of spectators, or at least of women and children, a request that will be denied for the time being. People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for, and they have the right to subject their children to it, but I can assure you of one thing: you will receive what you see and hear in silence or you will leave this courtroom, but you won't leave it until the whole boiling of you come before me on contempt charges. Mr. Ewell, you will keep your testimony within the confines of Christian English usage, if that is possible. Proceed, Mr. Gilmer.

Gilmer: Mr. Ewell, did you see the defendant having sexual intercourse with your daughter?

Bob: Yes, I did.

Gilmer: Did you have a clear view of the room?

Bob: Yes sir.

Gilmer: How did the room look?

Bob: Well, it was all slung about, like there was a fight.

Gilmer: What did you do when you saw the defendant?

Bob: Well, I run around the house to get in, but he run out the front door just ahead of me. I sawed who he was, all right. I was too distracted about Mayella to run after him. I run in the house and she was lyin' on the floor squallin

Gilmer: Then what did you do?

Bob: Why, I run for Tate quick as I could. I knowed who it was, all right, lived down yonder in that nigger-nest, passed the house every day. Jedge, I've asked this county for fifteen years to clean out that nest down yon- der, they're dangerous to live around 'sides devaluin' my property-

Gilmer: (*hurriedly*) Thank you, Mr. Ewell.

(Bob makes a hasty descent from the stand and ran smack into Atticus, who had risen to question him)

Atticus: Just a minute, sir. Could I ask you a question or two?

(Bob returns to the witness stand)

Atticus: Mr. Ewell, folks were doing a lot of running that night. Let's see, you say you ran to the house, you ran to the window, you ran inside, you ran to Mayella, you ran for Mr. Tate. Did you, during all this running, run for a doctor?

Bob: Wadn't no need to. I seen what happened.

Atticus: But there's one thing I don't understand," said Atticus. "Weren't you concerned with Mayella's condition?"

Bob: I most positively was, I seen who done it.

Atticus: No, I mean her physical condition. Did you not think the nature of her injuries warranted immediate medical attention?

Bob: What?

Atticus: Didn't you think she should have had a doctor, immediately?

Bob: I never thought of it, I had never called a doctor to any of mine in his life, and if I had it would have cost him five dollars. That all?

Atticus: Not quite, Mr. Ewell, you heard the sheriff's testimony, didn't you?

Bob: How's that?

Atticus: You were in the courtroom when Mr. Heck Tate was on the stand, weren't you? You heard everything he said, didn't you?

Bob: Yes.

Atticus: Do you agree with his description of Mayella's injuries?

Bob: How's that?

Atticus: Mr. Tate testified that her right eye was blackened, that she was beaten around the-

Bob: Oh yeah, I hold with everything Tate said.

Atticus: You do? I just want to make sure. *(Atticus goes to the court reporter and whispers).*

Reporter: . . . which eye her left oh yes that'd make it her right it was her right eye Mr. Finch I remember now she was bunged...Up on that side of the face Sheriff please repeat what you said it was her right eye I said.

Atticus: Thank you, Bert. You heard it again, Mr. Ewell. Do you have anything to add to it? Do you agree with the sheriff?

Bob: I holds with Tate. Her eye was blacked and she was mighty beat up.

Atticus: Mr. Ewell, can you read and write?

Gilmer: Objection, can't see what witness's literacy has to do with the ease, irrelevant'n'immaterial."

(Judge Taylor is about to speak)

Atticus: Judge, if you'll allow the question plus another one you'll soon see.

Judge: All right, let's see, but make sure we see, Atticus. Overruled.

Atticus: I'll repeat the question, can you read and write?

Bob: I most positively can.

Atticus: Will you write your name and show us?

Bob: I most positively will. How do you think I sign my relief checks?

Atticus: *(reaches in his pocket for an envelope and a pen; he hands it to Mr. Ewell)* Would you write your name for us? Clearly now, so the jury can see you do it.

(Bob signs the envelope with his left hand)

Bob: What's so interestin'?

Judge: You're left-handed, Mr. Ewell.

Bob: I don't see what my being left-handed had to do with it, I am a Christ-fearing man and Atticus Finch is taking advantage of me. Tricking lawyers like Atticus Finch take advantage of me all the time with their tricking ways. I told you what happened, and I'd say it again and again.

Gilmer: About your writing with your left hand, are you ambidextrous, Mr. Ewell?

Bob: I most positively am not, I can use one hand good as the other, one hand good as the other.

Jem: We've got him.

Narrator 1: Scout didn't think so: Atticus was trying to show that Mr. Ewell could have beaten up Mayella. If her right eye was blacked and she was beaten mostly on the right side of the face, it would tend to show that a left-handed person did it. Sherlock Holmes and Jem Finch would agree. But Tom Robinson could easily be left-handed, too.

Chapter 18

Clerk: Mayella Violet Ewell-! ***(Mayella Ewell takes the stand)***.

Gilmer: Please tell the jury, in your own words, what happened on the evening of November twenty-first of last year

(Mayella sits silently)

Gilmer: ***(patiently)*** Where were you at dusk on that evening?

Mayella: On the porch.

Gilmer: Which porch?

Mayella: Ain't but one, the front porch.

Gilmer: What were you doing on the porch?

Mayella: Nothin'.

Judge: Just tell us what happened. You can do that, can't you?

(Mayella looks at Judge Taylor and bursts into tears)

Judge: *(After letting her cry for a while)* That's enough now. Don't be 'fraid of anybody here, as long as you tell the truth. All this is strange to you, I know, but you've nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to fear. What are you scared of?

(Mayella mumbles behind her hands)

Judge: What was that?

Mayella: Him *(Mayella points at Atticus)*

Judge: Mr. Finch?

Mayella: Don't want him doin' me like he done Papa, tryin' to make him out lefthanded . . .

Judge: How old are you?

Mayella: Nineteen-and-a-half

Judge: Mr. Finch has no idea of searing you, and if he did, I'm here to stop him. That's one thing I'm sitting up here for. Now you're a big girl, so you just sit up straight and tell the... tell us what happened to you. You can do that, can't you?

Scout: Has she got good sense?

Jem: Can't tell yet. She's got enough sense to get the judge sorry for her, but she might be just-oh, I don't know.

Mayella: Well sir, I was on the porch and -and he came along and, you see, there was this old chiffarobe in the yard Papa'd brought in to chop up for kindlin'-Papa told me to do it while he was off in the woods but I wadn't feelin' strong enough then, so he came by-

Gilmer: Who is 'he'?

(Mayella points to Tom)

Gilmer: I'll have to ask you to be more specific, please, the reporter can't put down gestures very well.

Mayella: That'n yonder, Robinson.

Gilmer: Then what happened?

Mayella: I said come here, nigger, and bust up this chiffarobe for me, I gotta nickel for you. He coulda done it easy enough, he could. So he come in the yard an' I went in the house to get him the nickel and I turned around an 'fore I knew it he was on me. Just run up behind me, he did. He got me round the

neck, cussin' me an' sayin' dirt -I fought'n'hollered, but he had me round the neck. He hit me agin an' agin -he chunked me on the floor an' choked me'n took advantage of me.

Gilmer: Did you scream? Did you scream and fight back?

Mayella: Reckon I did, hollered for all I was worth, kicked and hollered loud as I could.

Gilmer: Then what happened?

Mayella: I don't remember too good, but next thing I knew Papa was in the room a'standin' over me hollerin' who done it, who done it? Then I sorta fainted an' the next thing I knew Mr. Tate was pullin' me up offa the floor and leadin' me to the water bucket.

Gilmer: You say you fought him off as hard as you could? Fought him tooth and nail?

Mayella: I positively did.

Gilmer: You are positive that he took full advantage of you?

Mayella: He done what he was after.

Gilmer: That's all for the time being, but you stay there. I expect big bad Mr. Finch has some questions to ask you.

Judge: State will not prejudice the witness against counsel for the defense, at least not at this time.

Atticus: Miss Mayella, I won't try to scare you for a while, not yet. Let's just get acquainted. How old are you?

Mayella: Said I was nineteen, said it to the judge yonder.

Atticus: So you did, so you did, ma'am. You'll have to bear with me, Miss Mayella, I'm getting along and can't remember as well as I used to. I might ask you things you've already said before, but you'll give me an answer, won't you? Good.

Mayella: Won't answer a word you say long as you keep on mockin' me.

Atticus: Ma'am?

Mayella: Long's you keep on makin' fun o'me.

Judge: Mr. Finch is not making fun of you. What's the matter with you?

Mayella: Long's he keeps on callin' me ma'am an sayin' Miss Mayella. I don't hafta take his sass, I ain't called upon to take it.

Judge: That's just Mr. Finch's way, we've done business in this court for years and years, and Mr. Finch is always courteous to everybody. He's not trying to mock you, he's trying to be polite. That's just his way. Atticus, let's get on with these proceedings, and let the record show that the witness has not been sassed, her views to the contrary.

Atticus: You say you're nineteen, How many sisters and brothers have you?

Mayella: Seb'm

Atticus: You the eldest? The oldest?

Mayella: Yes.

Atticus: How long has your mother been dead?

Mayella: Don't know - long time.

Atticus: Did you ever go to school?

Mayella: Read'n'write good as Papa yonder.

Atticus: How long did you go to school?

Mayella: Two year-three year - dunno.

Narrator 2: The jury learned the following things: their relief check was far from enough to feed the family, and there was strong suspicion that Papa drank it up anyway-he sometimes went off in the swamp for days and came home sick; the weather was seldom cold enough to require shoes, but when it was, you could make dandy ones from strips of old tires; the family hauled its water in buckets from a spring that ran out at one end of the dump-they kept the surrounding area clear of trash-and it was everybody for himself as far as keeping clean went: if you wanted to wash you hauled your own water; the younger children had perpetual colds and suffered from chronic ground-itch; there was a lady who came around sometimes and asked Mayella why she didn't stay in school - she wrote down the answer; with two members of the family reading and writing, there was no need for the rest of them to learn-Papa needed them at home.

Atticus: Miss Mayella, a nineteen-year-old girl like you must have friends. Who are your friends?

Mayella: (*puzzled*) Friends?

Atticus: Yes, don't you know anyone near your age, or older, or younger? Boys and girls? Just ordinary friends?

Mayella: (*Hostile*) You makin' fun o'me agin, Mr. Finch?

Atticus: Do you love your father, Miss Mayella?

Mayella: Love him, whatcha mean?

Atticus: I mean, is he good to you, is he easy to get along with?

Mayella: He does tollable, 'cept when -

Atticus: Except when?

Mayella: Except when nothin'. Said he does tollable."

Atticus: Except when he's drinking?

(Mayella nods)

Atticus: Does he ever go after you?

Mayella: How you mean?

Atticus: When he's -riled, has he ever beaten you?

Judge: Answer the question, Miss Mayella.

Mayella: My paw's never touched a hair o' my head in my life. He never touched me.

Atticus: *(pushing his glasses up on his nose)* We've had a good visit, Miss Mayella, and now I guess we'd better get to the case. You say you asked Tom Robinson to come chop up a-what was it?

Mayella: A chiffarobe, a old dresser full of drawers on one side.

Atticus: Was Tom Robinson well known to you?

Mayella: Whaddya mean?

Atticus: I mean did you know who he was, where he lived?

Mayella: *(noded)* I knowed who he was, he passed the house every day.

Atticus: Was this the first time you asked him to come inside the fence?

(Mayella jumps slightly at the question)

Atticus: Was-

Mayella: Yes it was.

Atticus: Didn't you ever ask him to come inside the fence before?

Mayella: *(with more confidence)* I did not, I certainly did not.

Atticus: One did not's enough. You never asked him to do odd jobs for you before?

Mayella: I mighta, there was several niggers around.

Atticus: Can you remember any other occasions? All right, now to what happened. You said Tom Robinson was behind you in the room when you turned around, that right?

Mayella: Yes.

Atticus: You said he 'got you around the neck cussing and saying dirt'-is that right?

Mayella: 't's right.

Atticus: You say 'he caught me and choked me and took advantage of me - is that right?

Mayella: That's what I said.

Atticus: Do you remember him beating you about the face? ... You seem sure enough that he choked you. All this time you were fighting back, remember? You 'kicked and hollered as loud as you could.' Do you remember him beating you about the face?

(Mayella stays silent)

Atticus: It's an easy question, Miss Mayella, so I'll try again. Do you remember him beating you about the face? Do you remember him beating you about the face?

Mayella: No, I don't recollect if he hit me. I mean yes I do, he hit me.

Atticus: Was your last sentence your answer?

Mayella: Huh? Yes, he hit-I just don't remember, I just don't remember . . . it all happened so quick.

Judge: Don't you cry, young woman-

Atticus: Let her cry if she wants to, Judge. We've got all the time in the world.

Mayella: I'll answer any question you got -get me up here an' mock me, will you? I'll answer any question you got.

Atticus: That's fine, There're only a few more. Miss Mayella, not to be tedious, you've testified that the defendant hit you, grabbed you around the neck, choked you, and took advantage of you. I want you to be sure you have the right man. Will you identify the man who raped you?

Mayella: I will, that's him right yonder. *(Mayella point at Tom)*

Atticus: *(turning to Tom)* Tom, stand up. Let Miss Mayella have a good long look at you. Is this the man, Miss Mayella?

Narrator 1: Tom Robinson's powerful shoulders rippled under his thin shirt. He rose to his feet and stood with his right hand on the back of his chair. He looked oddly off balance, but it was not from the way he was standing. His left arm was fully twelve inches shorter than his right, and hung dead at his side. It ended in a small shriveled hand, and from as far away as the balcony one could see that it was no use to him.

Jem: Scout, Scout, look! Reverend, he's crippled!

Reverend Sykes: He got it caught in a cotton gin, caught it in Mr. Dolphus Raymond's cotton gin when he was a boy . . . like to bled to death . . . tore all the muscles loose from his bones—

Atticus: Is this the man who raped you?

Mayella: It most certainly is.

Atticus: How?

Mayella: *(raging)* I don't know how he done it, but he done it - I said it all happened so fast I---

Atticus: Now let's consider this calmly-

Gilmer: Objection! He is browbeating the witness!

Judge: Oh sit down, Horace, he's doing nothing of the sort. If anything, the witness's browbeating Atticus.

Atticus: Now, Miss Mayella, you've testified that the defendant choked and beat you-you didn't say that he sneaked up behind you and knocked you cold, but you turned around and there he was- do you wish to reconsider any of your testimony?

Mayella: You want me to say something that didn't happen?

Atticus: No ma'am, I want you to say something that did happen. Tell us once more, please, what happened?

Mayella: I told'ja what happened.

Atticus: You testified that you turned around and there he was. He choked you then?

Mayella: Yes.

Atticus: Then he released your throat and hit you?

Mayella: I said he did.

Atticus: He blacked your left eye with his right fist?

Mayella: I ducked and it-it glanced, that's what it did. I ducked and it glanced off.

Atticus: You're becoming suddenly clear on this point. A while ago you couldn't remember too well, could you?

Mayella: I said he hit me.

Atticus: All right. He choked you, he hit you, then he raped you, that right?

Mayella: It most certainly is.

Atticus: You're a strong girl, what were you doing all the time, just standing there?

Mayella: I told'ja I hollered'n'kicked'n'fought-!

Judge: One question at a time, Atticus. Give the witness a chance to answer.

Atticus: All right, why didn't you run?

Mayella: I tried to . . .

Atticus: Tried to? What kept you from it?

Mayella: I - he slung me down. That's what he did, he slung me down'n got on top of me.

Atticus: You were screaming all this time?

Mayella: I certainly was.

Atticus: Then why didn't the other children hear you? Where were they? At the dump? (*Atticus pauses for Mayella's answer; she remains silent*) Where were they? Why didn't your screams make them come running? The dump's closer than the woods, isn't it? (*still no answer*) Or didn't you scream until you saw your father in the window? You didn't think to scream until then, did you? (*no answer*) Did you scream first at your father instead of at Tom Robinson? Was that it? (*no answer*) Who beat you up? Tom Robinson or your father? (*no answer*) What did your father see in the window, the crime of rape or the best defense to it? Why don't you tell the truth, child, didn't Bob Ewell beat you up?

Mayella: I got somethin' to say.

Atticus: Do you want to tell us what happened

Mayella: I got somethin' to say an' then I ain't gonna say no more. That nigger yonder took advantage of me an' if you fine fancy gentlemen don't wanta do nothin' about it then you're all yellow stinkin' cowards, stinkin' cowards, the lot of you. Your fancy airs don't come to nothin'-your ma'amin' and Miss Mayellerin' don't come to nothin', Mr. Finch.

(She bursts into real tears. As she leaves the stand she glares Atticus with intense hatred.)

Gilmer: The state rests.

Judge: It's time we all did. We'll take ten minutes.

Scout: Jem, Mr. Underwood's seen us.

Jem: That's okay. He won't tell Atticus, he'll just put it on the social side of the Tribune.

Judge: It's gettin' on to four. Shall we try to wind up this afternoon? How 'bout it, Atticus?

Atticus: I think we can.

Judge: How many witnesses you got?

Atticus: One.

Judge: Well, call him.

Chapter 19

Narrator 2: Thomas Robinson reached around, ran his fingers under his left arm and lifted it. He guided his arm to the Bible and his rubber-like left hand sought contact with the black binding. As he raised his right hand, the useless one slipped off the Bible and hit the clerk's table.

Judge: That'll do, Tom.

Narrator 1: Atticus quickly introduce Tom. Tom was twenty-five years of age; he was married with three children; he had been in trouble with the law before: he once received thirty days for disorderly conduct.

Atticus: It must have been disorderly, what did it consist of?

Tom: Got in a fight with another man, he tried to cut me.

Atticus: Did he succeed?

Tom: Yes suh, a little, not enough to hurt. You see, I...

Atticus: Yes, you were both convicted?"

Tom: Yes suh, I had to serve 'cause I couldn't pay the fine. Other fellow paid his'n.

Dill: *(leans across Scout to ask Jem)* What is Atticus doing?

Jem: He's showing the jury Tom has nothin' to hide.

Atticus: Were you acquainted with Mayella Violet Ewell?

Tom: Yes suh, I had to pass her place goin' to and from the field every day.

Atticus: Whose field?

Tom: I picks for Mr. Link Deas.

Atticus: Were you picking cotton in November?

Tom: No suh, I works in his yard fall an' wintertime. I works pretty steady for him all year round, he's got a lot of pecan trees'n things.

Atticus: You say you had to pass the Ewell place to get to and from work. Is there any other way to go?

Tom: No suh, none's I know of.

Atticus: Tom, did she ever speak to you?

Tom: Why, yes suh, I'd tip m'hat when I'd go by, and one day she asked me to come inside the fence and bust up a chiffarobe for her.

Atticus: When did she ask you to chop up the-the chiffarobe?

Tom: Mr. Finch, it was way last spring. I remember it because it was choppin' time and I had my hoe with me. I said I didn't have nothin' but this hoe, but she said she had a hatchet. She give me the hatchet and I broke up the chiffarobe. She said, 'I reckon I'll hafta give you a nickel, won't I an' I said, 'No ma'am, there ain't no charge.' Then I went home. Mr. Finch, that was way last spring, way over a year ago.

Atticus: Did you ever go on the place again?

Tom: Yes suh.

Atticus: When?

Atticus: Under what circumstances.

Tom: *(looking for clarification)* Please, sub?

Atticus: Why did you go inside the fence lots of times?

Tom: She'd call me in, suh. Seemed like every time I passed by yonder she'd have some little somethin' for me to do--choppin' kindlin', totin' water for her. She watered them red flowers every day.

Atticus: Were you paid for your services?

Tom: No sub, not after she offered me a nickel the first time. I was glad to do it, Mr. Ewell didn't seem to help her none, and neither did the chillun, and I knowed she didn't have no nickels to spare.

Atticus: Where were the other children?

Tom: They was always around, all over the place. They'd watch me work, some of 'em, some of 'em'd set in the window.

Atticus: Would Miss Mayella talk to you?

Tom: Yes sir, she talked to me.

Narrator 2: As Tom Robinson gave his testimony, Scout decided that Mayella Ewell must have been the loneliest person in the world. She was even lonelier than Boo Radley, who had not been out of the house in twenty-five years. When Atticus asked had she any friends, she seemed not to know what he meant, then she thought he was making fun of her. She was as sad, as what Jem called a mixed child: white people wouldn't have anything to do with her because she lived among pigs; Negroes wouldn't have anything to do with her because she was white.

Narrator 1: She couldn't live like Mr. Dolphus Raymond, who preferred the company of Negroes, because she didn't own a riverbank and she wasn't from a fine old family. Nobody said, "That's just their way," about the Ewells. Maycomb gave them Christmas baskets, welfare money, and the back of its hand. Tom Robinson was probably the only person who was ever decent to her. 'But she said he took advantage of her, and when she stood up she looked at him as if he were dirt beneath her feet.

Atticus: Did you ever, Atticus interrupted my meditations, Seat any time, go on the Ewell property--did you ever set foot on the Ewell property without an express invitation from one of them?

Tom: No suh, Mr. Finch, I never did. I wouldn't do that, sub.

Atticus: Tom, what happened to you on the evening of November twenty-first of last year?

Tom: Mr. Finch, I was goin' home as usual that evenin', an' when I passed the Ewell place Miss Mayella were on the porch, like she said she were. It seemed real quiet like, an' I didn't quite know

Well, I went inside the fence an' looked around for some kindlin' to work on, but I didn't see none, and she says, 'Naw, I got somethin' for you to do in the house. Th' old door's off its hinges an' fall's comin' on pretty fast.' I said you got a screwdriver, Miss Mayella? She said she sho' had. Well, I went up the steps an' she motioned me to come inside, and I went in the front room an' looked at the door. I said Miss Mayella, this door look all right. I pulled it back'n forth and those hinges was all right. Then she shet the door in my face. Mr. Finch, I was wonderin' why it was so quiet like, an' it come to me that there weren't a chile on the place, not a one of 'em, and I said Miss Mayella, where the chillun? I say where the chillun? An' she says -she was laughin', sort of-she says they all gone to town to get ice creams. She says, 'Took me a slap year to save seb'm nickels, but I done it. They all gone to town.

Atticus: What did you say then, Tom?

Tom: I said somethin' like, why Miss Mayella, that's right smart o'you to treat 'em. An' she said, 'You think so?' I don't think she understood what I was thinkin'-I meant it was smart of her to save like that, an' nice of her to treat 'em.

Atticus: I understand you, Tom. Go on.

Tom: Well, I said I best be goin', I couldn't do nothin' for her, an' she says oh yes I could, an' I ask her what, and she says to just step on that chair yonder an' git that box down from on top of the chiffarobe.

Atticus: Not the same chiffarobe you busted up?

Tom: *(smiles)* Naw suh, another one. Most as tall as the room. So I done what she told me, an' I was just reachin' when the next thing I knows she-she'd grabbed me round the legs, grabbed me round th' legs, Mr. Finch. She seared me so bad I hopped down an' turned the chair over-that was the only thing, only furniture, 'sturbed in that room, Mr. Finch, when I left it. I swear 'fore God.

Atticus: What happened after you turned the chair over? Tom, you're sworn to tell the whole truth. Will you --tell it? What happened after that?

Judge: Answer the question. Judge Taylor.

Tom: Mr. Finch, I got down offa that chair an' turned around an' she sorta jumped on me.

Atticus: Jumped on you? Violently?

Tom: No suh, she - she hugged me. She hugged me round the waist. *(The crowd murmurs)*

Judge: *(Bangs gavel)* Order! *(This quiets the crowd)*

Atticus: Then what did she do?

Tom: *(Swallows hard)* She reached up an' kissed me 'side of th' face. She says she never kissed a grown man before an' she might as well kiss a nigger. She says what her papa do to her don't count.

She says, 'Kiss me back, nigger.' I say Miss Mayella lemme outa here an' tried to run but she got her back to the door an' I'da had to push her. I didn't wanta harm her, Mr. Finch, an' I say lemme pass, but just when I say it Mr. Ewell yonder hollered through th' window.

Atticus: What did he say?

Tom: *(swallows hard again)* Somethin' not fittin' to say-not fittin' for these folks'n chillun to hear...

Atticus: What did he say, Tom? You must tell the jury what he said.

Tom: *(shuts his eyes tight)* He says you goddamn whore, I'll kill ya.

Atticus: Then what happened?

Tom: Mr. Finch, I was runnin' so fast I didn't know what happened.

Atticus: Tom, did you rape Mayella Ewell?

Tom: I did not, suh.

Atticus: Did you harm her in any way?

Tom: I did not, sub.

Atticus: Did you resist her advances?

Tom: Mr. Finch, I tried. I tried to 'thout bein' ugly to her. I didn't wanta be ugly, I didn't wanta push her or nothin'.

Narrator 2: At the time, Scout did not understand the subtlety of Tom's predicament: he would not have dared strike a white woman under any circumstances and expect to live long, so he took the first opportunity to run-a sure sign of guilt.

Atticus: Tom, go back once more to Mr. Ewell. Did he say anything to you?

Tom: Not anything, suh. He mighta said somethin', but I weren't there-

Atticus: That'll do. What you did hear, who was he talking to?

Tom: Mr. Finch, he were talkin' and lookin' at Miss Mayella.

Atticus: Then you ran?

Tom: I sho' did, suh.

Atticus: Why did you run?

Tom: I was seared, suh.

Atticus: *Why were you scared?*

Tom: Mr. Finch, if you was a nigger like me, you'd be scared, too.

(Atticus moves back to his seat and Mr. Gilmer gets up)

Link Deas: *(interrupting)* I just want the whole lot of you to know one thing right now. That boy's worked for me eight years an' I ain't had a speck o'trouble outa him. Not a speck.

Judge: Shut your mouth, sir! Link Deas if you have anything you want to say you can say it under oath and at the proper time, but until then you get out of this room, you hear me? Get out of this room, sir, you hear me? I'll be damned if I'll listen to this case again!

Jem: It ain't like one of the jurymen got up and started talking, I think it'd be different then. Mr. Link was just disturbin' the peace or something.

Judge: *(to the reporter)* Please expunge anything you happened to have written down after 'Mr. Finch if you were a nigger like me you'd be seared too', *(looks at the jury)* Please disregard the interruption. Go ahead, Mr. Gilmer.

Gilmer: You were given thirty days once for disorderly conduct, Robinson?

Tom: Yes suh.

Gilmer: What'd the nigger look like when you got through with him?

Tom: He beat me, Mr. Gilmer.

Gilmer: Yes, but you were convicted, weren't you?

Atticus: *(tiredly)* It was a misdemeanor and it's in the record, Judge.

Judge: *(also wearily)* Witness'll answer, though.

Tom: Yes suh, I got thirty days.

Gilmer: Robinson, you're pretty good at busting up chiffarobes and kindling with one hand, aren't you?

Tom: Yes suh, I reckon so.

Gilmer: Strong enough to choke the breath out of a woman and sling her to the floor?

Tom: I never done that, suh.

Gilmer: But you are strong enough to?

Tom: I reckon so, suh.

Gilmer: Had your eye on her a long time, hadn't you, boy?

Tom: No suh, I never looked at her.

Gilmer: Then you were mighty polite to do all that chopping and hauling for her, weren't you, boy?

Tom: I was just tryin' to help her out, suh.

Gilmer: That was mighty generous of you, you had chores at home after your regular work, didn't you?

Tom: Yes suh.

Gilmer: Why didn't you do them instead of Miss Ewell's?

Tom: I done 'em both, suh.

Gilmer: You must have been pretty busy. Why?

Tom: Why what, suh?

Gilmer: Why were you so anxious to do that woman's chores?

Tom: (*hesitates, searching for the answer*) Looked like she didn't have nobody to help her, like I says!

Gilmer: With Mr. Ewell and seven children on the place, boy?

Tom: Well, I says it looked like they never help her none--!

Gilmer: You did all this chopping and work from sheer goodness, boy?

Tom: Tried to help her, I says.

Gilmer: (*smiles grimly at the jury*) You're a mighty good fellow, it seems - did all this for not one penny?

Tom: Yes suh. I felt right sorry for her; she seemed to try more'n the rest of 'em-

Gilmer: You felt sorry for her, you felt sorry for her?

Narrator 1: The witness realized his mistake and shifted uncomfortably in the chair. But the damage was done. In the gallery, nobody liked Tom Robinson's answer. Mr. Gilmer paused a long time to let it sink in.

Gilmer: Now you went by the house as usual, last November twenty-first, and she asked you to come in and bust up a chiffarobe?

Tom: No suh.

Gilmer: Do you deny that you went by the house?

Tom: No suh - she said she had somethin' for me to do inside the house--!

Gilmer: She says she asked you to bust up a chiffarobe, is that right?

Tom: No suh, it ain't.

Gilmer: Then you say she's lying, boy?

(Atticus stands to object)

Tom: I don't say she's lyin', Mr. Gilmer, I say she's mistaken in her mind.

Gilmer: Didn't Mr. Ewell run you off the place, boy?

Tom: No suh, I don't think he did.

Gilmer: Don't think, what do you mean

Tom: I mean I didn't stay long enough for him to run me off...

Gilmer: You're very candid about this, why did you run so fast ?

Tom: I says I was scared, suh.

Gilmer: If you had a clear conscience, why were you scared?

Tom: Like I says before, it weren't safe for any nigger to be in a fix like that.

Gilmer: But you weren't in a fix - you testified that you were resisting Miss Ewell. Were you so scared that she'd hurt you, you ran, a big buck like you?

Tom: No suh, I's scared I'd be in court, just like I am now.

Gilmer: Scared of arrest, scared you'd have to face up to what you did?

Gilmer: Are you being impudent to, me, boy?

Tom: No suh, I didn't go to be?

(Dill starts crying)

Jem: Scout, take Dill out.

Scout: No.

Jem: If you don't go with him, I'll make you.

Reverend Sykes: You better go.

Narrator 2: Scout and Dill walk outside.

Scout: Ain't you feeling good?

Link Deas: Anything happenin', Scout?"

Scout: No sir, Dill here, he's sick. Come on out under the trees, heat got you, I expect.

Dill: It was just him I couldn't stand.

Scout: Who, Tom?

Dill: That old Mr. Gilmer doin' him thataway, talking so hateful to him.

Scout: Dill, that's his job. Why, if we didn't have prosecutors-well, we couldn't have defense attorneys, I reckon.

Dill: I know all that, Scout. It was the way he said it made me sick, plain sick.

Scout: He's supposed to act that way, Dill, he was cross...

Dill: He didn't act that way when-

Scout: Dill, those were his own witnesses.

Dill: Well, Mr. Finch didn't act that way to Mayella and old man Ewell when he cross-examined them. The way that man called him 'boy' all the time and sneered at him, an' looked around at the jury every time he answered---

Scout: Well, Dill, after all he's just a Negro.

Dill: I don't care one speck. It ain't right, somehow it ain't right to do 'em that way. Hasn't anybody got any business talkin' like that-it just makes me sick.

Scout: That's just Mr. Gilmer's way, Dill, he does 'em all that way. You've never seen him get good'n down on one yet. Why, when-well, today Mr. Gilmer seemed to me like he wasn't half trying. They do 'em all that way, most lawyers, I mean.

Dill: Mr. Finch doesn't.

Scout: He's not an example, Dill, he's ... He's the same in the courtroom as he is on the public streets.

Dill: That's not what I mean.

Dolphus Raymond: *(out of nowhere)* I know what you mean, boy, you aren't thin-hided, it just makes you sick, doesn't it?

Chapter 20

Dolphus Raymond: Come on round here, son, I got something that'll settle your stomach...Here. *(He offers Dill his paper sack with straws in it)* Take a good sip, it'll quieten you.

(Dill sucked on the straws, smiled, and pulled at length)

Dolphus Raymond: Hee hee

Scout: Dill, you watch out, now.

Dill: Scout, it's nothing but Coca-Cola.

Dolphus Raymond: You little folks won't tell on me now, will you? It'd ruin my reputation if you did.

Scout: You mean all you drink in that sack's Coca-Cola? Just plain Coca-Cola?

Dolphus Raymond: Yes ma'am. That's all I drink, most of the time.

Scout: Then you just pretend you're half-? I beg your pardon, sir, I didn't mean to be...

(Dolphus Raymond chuckles, not at all offended)

Scout: Why do you do like you do?

Dolphus Raymond: Wh--oh yes, you mean why do I pretend? Well, it's very simple, Some folks don't like the way I live. Now I could say the hell with 'em, I don't care if they don't like it. I do say I don't care if they don't like it, right enough - but I don't say the hell with 'em, see?

Dill and Scout: No sir.

Dolphus Raymond: I try to give 'em a reason, you see. It helps folks if they can latch onto a reason. When I come to town, which is seldom, if I weave a little and drink out of this sack, folks can say Dolphus Raymond's in the clutches of whiskey—that's why he won't change his ways. He can't help himself, that's why he lives the way he does.

Scout: That ain't honest, Mr. Raymond, making yourself out badder'n you are already...

Dolphus Raymond: It ain't honest but it's mighty helpful to folks. Secretly, Miss Finch, I'm not much of a drinker, but you see they could never, never understand that I live like I do because that's the way I want to live.

Scout: Why would you entrust us with your deepest secret?

Dolphus Raymond: Because you're children and you can understand it, and because I heard that one... *(he looks at Dill)* Things haven't caught up with that one's instinct yet. Let him get a little older and he won't get sick and cry. Maybe things'll strike him as being - not quite right, say, but he won't cry, not when he gets a few years on him.

Dill: Cry about what, Mr. Raymond?

Dolphus Raymond: Cry about the simple hell people give other people without even thinking. Cry about the hell white people give colored folks, without even stopping to think that they're people, too.

Scout: Atticus says cheatin' a colored man is ten times worse than cheatin' a white man," I muttered. "Says it's the worst thing you can do.

Dolphus Raymond: I don't reckon it's - Miss Jean Louise, you don't know your pa's not a run-of-the-mill man, it'll take a few years for that to sink in—you haven't seen enough of the world yet. You haven't even seen this town, but all you gotta do is step back inside the courthouse.

Scout: That reminds me, we're missing nearly all of Mr. Gilmer's cross-examination. C'mon, Dill, you all right, now?"

Dill: Yeah. Glad I've metcha, Mr. Raymond, and thanks for the drink, it was mighty settlin'.

Narrator 1: The kids race back into the courtroom and settle back into the balcony.

Scout: Shoot, we missed it.

Narrator: Atticus was halfway through his speech to the jury.

Atticus: . . . absence of any corroborative evidence, this man was indicted on a capital charge and is now on trial for his life. . . .

Scout: How long's he been at it?

Jem: He's just gone over the evidence, and we're gonna win, Scout. I don't see how we can't. He's been at it 'bout five minutes. He made it as plain and easy as-well, as I'da explained it to you. You could've understood it, even.

Scout: Did Mr. Gilmer-?

Jem: Sh-h. Nothing new, just the usual. Hush now.