

## Fearful Symmetry

- Italicized lines are dialogue from the movie or narrated lines from the book.
- Townspeople are interviewed to give perspective on Harper Lee, people who were models for the characters, or their thoughts on the town and the South.

*Scout Cecil Jacobs is a big wet hen!*

**Narrator** *To Kill a Mockingbird* is an old-fashioned story. It is entirely real and entirely fantastic. There are hints of nostalgia. Perhaps even a few traces of courage and disbelief lurking in the fabric. All very old-fashioned, but looking clearly into the future.

A little like the music of Brahms, perhaps, which was accused of something similar. Having one foot solidly planted in the romantic sensibility, and the other rooted in all that was modern. Which, of course isn't modern for long. It's not a matter of style, but of heart. Of walking through the dark forests of experience to find the voice and beauty and wonder... of what only can be called one's original promise.

And art in one form or another, helps. Perhaps more than anything else. One reason people respond to this novel so greatly is that you do feel it's so well-informed by reality. And by emotional experiences... and a memory of a time that is gone... and yet, we all want to hold on to, you know. It makes us... It isn't that it's a perfect world, it's an imperfect world. But it's a varied world and it's a world that we recognize.

Most of us have some distant feeling about childhood. And that period for our life, that as we get older we give it certain kind of talismans and meanings that we went through so quickly and we didn't even know that they had meaning. And all of a sudden as you get old and begin to think back you think, well, this, this and this.... Then somehow this coalesced in something rather important... that you didn't even know was happening. And I think that's what memory can do for a talented writer. He reforms it into another kind of experience.

*Maudie Morning!*

**Robert Mulligan** Harper Lee had so caught that very specific world... and in such a wonderful way. I came to see Jean Louise ready for her first day at school. She put you in that town, on those streets with those people. And she caught the sights and the smells and the whole attitude... of that small Southern town.

**Narrator** There was layer upon layer of a gently evolving way of life. Simply by breathing the air... one sensed a built-in safety net of security. Strangeness was expected. But strangers could not escape familiarity. Indifference and oblivion could not prosper.

"Fame" was a five-letter word. And boredom was for rich and dull-witted Yankees. The most exciting times... were when you had absolutely nothing to do at all. Having fun required an active imagination. You made worlds out of sticks and shells. There was time for it. Time to develop character. It was the old South and the old South was good. It had a few bad things, but it was basically good. Everybody loved each other and everybody was courteous. And helped each other. If somebody's house burned... it didn't get to be noon before people... started carrying clothes and food and everything else. And they could be black or white.

Most of us of my age think that we had exceptionally fine teachers at the time we were in high school. Our principal was a man that could do most anything. He held chapel at least once a week... and his talk to chapel was as good as any preacher's sermon on Sunday.

During the summertime, when we were out of school he took school boys and built an auditorium onto that school. During that time, I was a Boy Scout, and that was the biggest thing for us. We had a scoutmaster who was the undertaker. I thought he was an old man. He must have been 50 then maybe.

We went on camps together and he would sing while we would go along and he called us all "Bully." Just a great man, gave us every Saturday of his life.

My family's lived right around here. All along, we've never been anywhere else. In fact, the only ones that ever moved out of this house was my three sisters that married. And they just moved out with their suitcases. Nobody else has ever moved out of the house... so we have a lot of memories in this place. For us. Nobody else would appreciate them. But we enjoy them.

My grandfather came to live in our home when I was still a school boy and his mind was bad. He, like most older people, he always wanted to go home, wanted to go home. And so, when he got up from the dinner table... we had a black man who looked after him. We had a horse and a wagon and they hitched up the horse and wagon with what we call a "spring seat." That's the seat across the wagon body. And the two of them went for a ride and they rode all afternoon. Well, if the children in the neighborhood knew about it... they went in the wagon, too. In the middle of the afternoon if a lady missed her child and said, "Where is he?" And they said, "He's in the wagon with Dandy and Mr. Moore." Well, she didn't think anymore about it, she'd look for him back about night. That was the daycare for that neighborhood.

**Narrator** The challenge of all great art, like life itself is to transform memory and imagination into an organism of enchantment and illumination. The least puerile of critics, may they rest in peace, have written that the novel and the film have transcended the usual artistic boundaries and snobberies by becoming pieces of folklore. This being, of course, a backhanded compliment. Nevertheless, it praises a vital

simplicity while undermining the importance of time and place. for this is the cauldron no less so than in America in the 1950s when giant shadows curled up into small armies of discontent. And nowhere did the fabric unravel more furiously than in Alabama.

**music** *Ain't Gonna Let Segregation Turn Me Around*

It was right before the period... of what seemed like anarchy to us... and it was before the Vietnam War. It's almost like the end of a vision of America... before the tumult and the chaos and the time of rage started.

**Gregory Peck** It came at a critical time in the fight for racial justice and civil-rights legislation that would put an end to some of the worst of the bigotry and the restrictions and the repression in the South. They're people that... a vanguard... who fight at the front so that the possibilities of all of us who are back there are enlarged. And what Harper Lee explores in many ways it's what's back there and why what is back there is so very special that it really energizes you and causes you to want to expand the front. Move the boundaries so everyone can live to the fullest.

**Mulligan** Even though it was an absolutely pure novel... that it's in no way begging to be made a movie... as some books are. At that time when I read it the book was already a great success. It had not been bought by anybody for movies. It had been rejected for movies by all the companies that had seen it when it was in galleys. A lot of the studios didn't go bidding on it... because they said, "What's it going to be about? Here's this middle-aged lawyer with two kids. There's no romance there's no violence except off-screen. There's no action. What is there? Where's the story?" We sent the book to Greg... and he said yes, immediately, I mean, instantly. And thank you.

**Peck** I read through the book and I could hardly wait until the next morning to call up and say, "If you want me, I'm your boy." I felt a close identification with the characters... with the story... with the social problem... with the father and children. I somehow felt it was something that I had to do.

**Mulligan** There's a reason why he was right for Atticus Finch... because they share a lot of the same qualities. I think the next step was to find out who could write it. And it didn't take much debating about who should do it... because I knew Horton and Horton knew that world. And actually, Horton resisted it for a time, He'd loved the book. And he was concerned about adapting a work he admired so much.

**Horton Foote** Alan brought Harper over to where I was living then, in Nyack. I don't know how she felt but it was love at first sight on my part. And I just somehow felt that we were members of the same family.

**Mulligan** She trusted us that the book would not be emasculated in some way or changed. That we would honor the book and be true to the book. Of course, it was Pakula I worked with during the script process. And he was passionately devoted to the script, to this novel. Passionately.

**Alan Pakula** Horton, at that time lived up in Nyack in this wonderful old Victorian house... right above the Hudson River. There we were in this idyllic Victorian house... looking at the kids playing down in the yard below. Just as the kids in *Mockingbird* played. This Southern man's house... And then we would go down and have dinner -- Southern dinner -- with all the collard greens and all that stuff I'd never had before. *Mockingbird*-type food. When I was given the novel... there were two things that helped me a great deal. One is, Alan said... "I think, it would be interesting to rethink the structure of the novel... to try to bring everything into the focus of a year."

*Scout* School finally ended and summer came... and so did Dill.

*Dill* Good morning.

**Foote** Then, a review called *Scout in the Wilderness*... showed the roots of Scout towards *Huckleberry Finn*, *Tom Sawyer*... and it just opened a whole thing for me. I don't know, it's one of those things that.... Very helpful to a writer.

**Peck** Harper was delighted with the screenplay. It all seemed to flow it seemed to be kind of natural. I feel that the time they called me and they had a book for me to read. It was one of the luckiest days of my life, really.

*Dill* Let's go watch.

*Jem* No, Dill. He wouldn't like that.

*Scout* Dill!

**Pakula** The hard thing of course, was casting the children.

**Mulligan** I said, "Let's find kids who are kids," And obviously, we wanted to hunt in the South... really look for kids in the South. So we started a search. There was a young woman at the time, Bodie Boatwright. She's from the South. We put her in charge of the search. And I don't know how many kids she saw, but she went all through the South.

**Philip Alford** There was a director here in town... who directed Town and Gown Theatre here... James Hatcher. He called my mother and said, "You need to take Philip to this audition," So she asked me if I wanted to go to the audition, and I said no. She said, "Well, you get out of school for half a day," And I said, "Okay," He is also the person who called Mary's mother.

**Ms. Badham** I had never done any acting. So my girlfriend and I had both gone down to interview for this thing. We got up on the stage, and they said, "Do you have something prepared?" or whatever, I was like, "No," you know. So we just got up and I vaguely remember something... about chopping some wood or something and doing.... I don't know what. It was kind of silly, something we just made up at the moment. And then about a month later or maybe less, two weeks later. We got a call to go to New York for a screen test... which was a big deal.

**Mulligan** They both came from Birmingham, Alabama. And they both had the quality that I was looking for. They were bright, They were alive. They seemed to have active imaginations.

**Alford** And so, both children come from four blocks from each other. We didn't know each other of course. I was 13. We wouldn't have known each other.

**Mulligan** They looked as if they could be brother and sister. That the facial contours and coloring and all of it... just seemed to work. We went down to Monroeville thinking that we might... make the picture there.

That's how I was able to meet her father... who was a real-life model for Atticus Finch. He was amused. First of all he was amused that his tomboy daughter... grew up to be a Pulitzer Prize winner. He was even more amused by the Hollywood types... who barged into his hometown.

*music: Alabama Bound*

**Narrator** Any voyage to Alabama runs the risk of contact with the natives. At first it might be hard to detect the roots running deep and wild. But the fog quickly lifts. Whatever the color or persuasion. Home, in Alabama, is an act of Promethean intoxication.

Before integration really took hold... as we say in Alabama... I was in a cantata or play that had music with it. It was about Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver. And it adapted as a musical piece... portions of Booker T. Washington's 1896 speech.

One of the famous lines from that speech is a part of a story. And it says, "Cast down your bucket where you are," And that, I remember even thinking at the time... kind of captured my family's feeling about Alabama. It was home it was our place... and we would cast down our buckets where we were.

**Narrator** Facades, by natural law, must change... even in Southwest Alabama. No one should understand this better than Hollywood folks. Only they almost certainly could not imagine either the significance of indoor plumbing or the so called improvements, injected by the WPA, WWII, or whatever W had government footing the bill.

**Norman Barnett** If you look at my store. the sidewalks around the square... were paved before the streets, and I think it was done by Chamber of Commerce, or Junior Chamber of Commerce. But the streets around the square in Monroeville were paved somewhere about 1935. The town had changed radically after World War II. A lot of the old buildings came down. There was a lot of corrugated iron up and modern looks to buildings and big plate-glass stores. It just didn't have the feel of the small town. There were small pockets here and there where you could put a camera and get an angle. And say, "There it is," A few houses. But it just didn't work. The courthouse was good to look at and we used essentially the same architecture of the interior of that courthouse.

*Bailiff This court is now in session. Everybody rise.*

Harper Lee visited the set and was stunned. In that it looked so much like a Southern town. Like her town. To be able to produce that look and that feel on a backlot at Universal Pictures in Hollywood... I have to credit the Production Designer with so much of that look and that feel and that's Henry Bumstead.

Somehow he discovered that there was a small town out in the San Fernando Valley that was about to be destroyed. And those houses all had the look of this Southern home. And he took and placed and built them, carved out a street. And there we were, in Maycomb.

Two things beyond the film itself that added to this film and pointed you in the right direction were Elmer Bernstein's score and the title sequence.

We called Steve Frankfurt to design the titles and Bob and I talked to him about trying to get the mysterious world of childhood. The secret world of childhood. It starts out with just this little girl humming.

*(girl humming)*

**Pakula** And there's no music. And then it's when a marble hits another marble as I recall. Suddenly the music starts... and it was magical, and bam! You were in the film. It was a very particular film. There's never been another film even remotely like it, in my opinion. It had to have an individual language. We were seeing an adult world... and really serious adult happenings, through the eyes of children. One approaches it in terms of what would address itself to children.

**Elmer Bernstein** What would children play on a piano, given a chance? What do children do when they go to the piano? What children do, very often, is they'll just play one note at a time.

[striking piano keys]

That's what children do. And it led to this idea.

[playing melody]

*Jean Louise Maycomb was a tired old town... even in 1932.*

It was our suggestion, the opening narration... which she just really loved. And almost like a piece of poetry.

*Jean Louise There was no hurry. for there was nowhere to go and nothing to buy... and no money to buy it with. Although Maycomb County had recently been told that it had nothing to fear but fear itself.*

You wanted a voice from now to pull you back into then. To say, "This is what this town looked like. This is what happened in these summer days and during the fall...and the following summer."

*Jem Come on, Scout. It's five o'clock.*

**Peck** I'll tell you a story about the first day of filming. The first scene was a scene... where Atticus was coming home from the courtroom or his law office. And the kids were expecting him and customarily the

boy took his briefcase, and they walked on down the street. Talking over the events of the day. And during the shot which was covered by a camera on a dolly track I just glanced at Harper. She was walking along behind the moving camera. And I saw something shining on her cheek. We finished the scene and Mulligan said "Marvelous. First scene, first day, first take. It's a print. It's gonna be in the movie." So, we were feeling pretty good about that and I walked over to Harper and I said "Were you crying? Well, how do you feel?" She said, "Oh, Gregory, you've got a little potbelly just like my daddy." Of course, I said "That's great acting." But it was the highest praise. She was very close to her father.

*Atticus* You concede the necessity of going to school... and we'll keep right on reading the same every night... just as we always have. Is that a bargain?

*Scout* "I had two cats...which I brought ashore...on my first raft. And I had a dog."

**Mulligan** The best scene in the movie for Mary and for Greg... is the scene in bed... when she asks about the watch, And she was just magic in that scene. She yawned, she rubbed her nose, the way she looked at the watch... the whole relationship without her mother. There was something very special happening between the two of them. To get the kids in that totally unselfconscious frame of mind... took very delicate handling.

**Mulligan** I tried to set up a mood on the set... that allowed the kids to be kids. They could climb on the equipment... as long as they didn't get in the way of the work. Allow them to explore, particularly early on.

**Alford** We weren't aware that they were setting up. As we rehearsed they would slowly move everything up. So that by the time we were ready to actually shoot the camera's right here, the crew is right there and the lights are ready to go, and they just start rolling.

**Peck** It was very much like them playing around their own backyard. Only playing, "Pretend."

**Ms. Badham** It was all just so easy. As I think back on it I get lost in memories... of just thinking how easy it was.

**Narrator** Of course, the character of Scout is anything but easy. Which was at least a guarantee, a uniquely Southern guarantee... that nothing gets dull.

**Alford** Mary had this horrible habit of repeating your lines back to you. We had a lot of arguments about that, So as we're shooting this scene. Mary's going [mimicking], with those eyebrows of hers working up and down. This happened at every dinner scene we ever had... the breakfast scene and the lunch scene. I had to eat lunch like 23 times. I had to eat breakfast the next day about 35 times. It was years before I could eat bacon and eggs again. Because Mary would start this....

*All right, get in. Hurry up. All right.*

**Alford** We argued constantly. I mean we had,,,, Possibly our biggest argument was that day. And we had just screamed and yelled at each other all morning long. So, I tried to kill Mary that day, I aimed the tire at a truck, an equipment truck, that was sitting off-camera. Thinking if I could push this tire fast enough and hard enough, that Mary would hit this camera truck and it'd kill her and all my troubles would be over. But it didn't happen that way.

**Narrator** The art of amusement has always been cultivated in the South. Shakespeare's taken seriously, And preferably unread. In that one is always onstage. Back then they made their fun. Now they've got to have somebody to tell them what to do and somebody's got to entertain them. They've got to have somebody doing something to interest them. In the years past that we're talking about a lot of it was done at home. And that was dominos and card games and in the summertime the smaller children played hide-and-seek out in the yard. And at the same time that they were playing hide-and-seek in the yard... the parents were on the front porch. To settle any disputes... and see that nothing happens.

**Narrator** Jem and Scout and Dill pretended to be the Radleys. They acted out their imaginings. They learned to be the other. Thus, they became masters of their world.

Claudia Durst Johnson The novel begins with a sort of idyllic setting. Tree houses, swings... children running loose... playing freely without any fear... of crime or other sorts of things. And it seems that this is a kind of Eden. Small-town Eden. Where there's this kind of surface tranquility. They want to see what is hidden. And the three children become attracted to a kind of... eerie, dark side of life... that they had first encountered in literature... and in movies. Particularly it is Dill... who first becomes interested in this and that's kind of fitting.

*Jem You look right puny for going on seven.*

*Dill I'm little, but I'm old. Folks call me Dill.*

**Mulligan** Dill is based on Truman Capote. And that Truman was a neighbor... who would come and visit in the summer. To visit an aunt he would be shipped off by his parents to spend the summer in Maycomb, in that town.

**Footnote** I did quite a bit of work on the character of the boy next door. Because the minute Harper told me that it was Truman as a little boy... my mind just went wild. You know, and I don't think it was already. I don't know what Truman was like, a little boy. I'm sure he really wasn't like that but it gave me a lot of... imaginative impulses.

**Narrator** There is not greater power than the power of the imagination. An overdressed runt of a boy... abandoned by his father and mother... becomes the catalyst for unceasing adventure. It is escape, And perhaps even a form of revenge. It is also the wild and insatiable hunger of the soul... for the one quality and reality that might supercede love. A world where we are king. Dill filled anyone who listened to him with this impulse... and perhaps even, with that most

beautiful and perilous freedom. To find oneself in the coldest spaces of eternal darkness. The secret was to steal the light from this temple... and use it to fill the darkness inside his heart.

*Stephanie* *Dill, what are you doing here?*

*Dill* *My Lord, Aunt Stephanie! You almost gave me a heart attack.*

*Stephanie* *I don't want you playing around that house over there. There's a maniac lives there and he's dangerous.*

I delivered newspapers when I first came over, and I had a route that included... Mr. Lee's house and Miss Henricks' house... and the house on the corner... that in the book, later was the Radley house. We in school knew that there was somebody in there, he looked out the windows. And everybody was scared of him.

*Jem* *I ain't scared. I go past Boo Radley's house nearly every day of my life.*

*Scout* *Always running.*

*Jem* *You hush up, Scout.*

Children would go on the opposite sides of the street, instead of going by the house. Boo Radley is used very deftly, in my opinion, by this wonderful author, to realign the community in a more classical way. I mean, initially what we have, Boo, the Radley house... that neither blacks nor whites want to walk by. That this great mystery of this demonized view of the family at first is one that's shared by the community. And that's what a community is, isn't it? A group of people who feel the same way about something.

**Elmer Bernstein** Boo Radley is two things for these children. One thing is, he's scary. But the funny thing about children is children love to be scared. It's kind of part of the adventure of life. And I got into that in a big way... the first time they go to the Boo Radley house. The music is a bit over the top, almost. It's very gothic, it's very big. But that's part of a commentary on the way the kids feel about it. Knowing that kids really enjoy, and I played on that a lot... is the mystery of it all. What was going on in that house? Who is Boo Radley? And what went on? And very often I did things like this...[playing]... which suggests a childish mystery, doesn't say anything but it asks a question.

**Johnson** Edgar Allan Poe said that, "We're attracted to terror because we long to know some reality above this surface of appearances that we are doomed to labor in." We long to know some kind of transcendent verity some glimpse of truth, He called it supernal beauty.

**Narrator** Unlike Boo Radley. Mrs. Dubose was a visible monster.

*Scout* *Hey, Mrs. Dubose.*

*Mrs. Dubose* *Don't you say "hey" to me, you ugly girl.*

She was a permanent fixture there on her porch. Showering the neighborhood with her bigotry... bitterness and notorious white

camellias. Her taunts would get under anybody's skin. Especially Jem's. Who could not tolerate her attacks on what he held for sacred... meaning Atticus.

So it didn't seem fair that after he beheaded all of her precious camellias... that Atticus not only made him read to her... but made him do it long after what was called for. What was Atticus up to?

*Atticus Grand seeing you, Mrs. Dubose.*

Somehow he knew that Mrs. Dubose needed the distraction... to overcome her morphine habit. So she could die clean and in control of her life. This was true courage... and Atticus wanted Jem to see it and know it.

**Mulligan** Ruth White got into makeup every day... and it would take her four hours to look like this old lady. And I just hated to lose it.

**Pakula** And it was beautifully played, beautifully directed by Bob. The kids were wonderful. And in the cutting of the film... it stopped the film. Again the difference between books and film. My experience growing up in a town like this... it's very true. We were half-amused... and half-celebrated the eccentric. We were kind of in awe of them, that they had the nerve to be eccentric. People who've lived here, say Monroe, would have more than their share... of what we call the casters.

My aunt was giving this birthday party for her youngest son. And they were out on the front of a house, because there was a cement walk out there... and they were skating up and down that little short cement walk. And my aunt went back in to get something, to renew some of the refreshments... and she heard the sugarcane popping... so she ran back out and asked me if I could shoot her husband's gun. And I said, yes. She said, "Well, come here." And I thought, what in the world does she want me to shoot the gun for? And she says, "There's a bunch of those kids down there popping off that sugarcane. I want you, when I holler, 'Get out of the sugarcane patch'... point the gun in the air, right up over the sugarcane patch... and shoot it." So she hollered "Get out of that sugarcane patch." And I popped the gun about that time. And they all started running. There was a barbed wire fence right behind the patch... and they just tore their clothes up, getting over that fence. My aunt just laughed, she thought that was the funniest thing... to see those boys running.

**Narrator** Oral history is at least as old as Homer. And nowhere is it more alive than in the South. The spoken story imparts the breath of ancestry... and a mental stomach for digesting our knowledge of good and evil. Which may help explain the gift of rhetoric exercised in abundance by our preachers... and politicians.

Cleophus Thomas Jr. There is a great oral tradition in the South... and we have institutions that really feed the oral tradition. And we see them in the book. The church and the courthouse. The value of the oral tradition is its democracy. It doesn't give to an intellectual elite the exclusive right... to shape communal memory, and the collective memory. It

makes... into a commonwealth the story of our shared lives. It's something that we share in common, and it's like a collection plate... into which we can all put something. Our stories, our myths. And the ease with which we are able to, in some way, cross boundaries.

**Narrator** It has been said that a Southerner would rather talk than read or write. Perhaps because if it isn't social, why bother? If it can't be discussed on the front porch, then it better be high adventure and infernal romance. Balm for our restless and very individual souls.

**Norman** Most homes at that time had a porch. And after the lady of the house... had done the housework in the morning, and prepared the noon meal... in the afternoon she cleaned up,,'. and in the early part of the evening, she went visiting. She maybe went next door, and sat on the porch... with that neighbor for an hour or two. Not necessarily next door, might have walked half a mile.

My mama lived here and her sister lived on the other side of town. And one would go to the other's house and visit a while and then when she started home, that woman would walk with her to town. And they'd stop there and visit a while, and when they start to separate this one would go back home, that one would go back with her a piece of the way. So it took an hour or two while they were visiting for them to get from one house to the other. My goodness, you know, half the time we spent talking... and now there's television... and all those things that disrupt. And God knows what's going to happen in the future... when all these channels start intruding into our lives. There's a lot of difference in the first few years that I taught in the attitude of the students to what they were in the last years I taught. When I first started they were interested in learning! And they could see that it was something worthwhile. But after everything else came in, television and all those other things... that detracted their attention... they were just quite different.

**Alford** Our society is totally different from what it was in the 1930's when this book happened. Families don't interact together in the same way. Television, video games dragged kids away from the families. "How did you like school, Scout?" "All right." You're never gonna get that, "Let's all sit around the dinner table every night and let's talk about how you did in school today." Kids aren't interested in doing that anymore. And we've given them permission not be interested in that anymore. Our culture has given them that permission. I mean, how many smartmouth kids you see on TV? All of them!

*Jem I'm ready.*

*Atticus Oh, Jem. It's half an hour before school starts.*

**Norman** Miss Ida Gaillard, she was the Business, Math teacher and did some of the bookkeeping and work in the principal's office. And she is still living at Purdue Hill. And looks very much like she did when she taught me, when I was in the ninth and tenth grade.

I believed in discipline. We laugh over it, with another teacher that's still living. She and I laugh all the time about it. If we had to do it

now we'd be in the pen because they wouldn't put up with us. We had discipline.

man You demanded the respect of your students, right?

Absolutely. Nell can tell you that.

*Scout Atticus, I'm not going back to school anymore.*

*Atticus Scout it's just the first day.*

**Ms. Badham** There aren't many children nowadays, who have a father or a mother, depending upon if it's a single house from a father or a mother, that they can look to and say, "This person is totally honest, totally loving and caring, and loves me without question. That isn't distracted by the flurry of today's world."

Johnson The household of Atticus is very eccentric. He seems to mute these class divisions and age divisions by allowing them to call him by his first name.

*Dill Why do you call your daddy Atticus?*

*Scout Because Jem does.*

*Dill But why does he?*

*Scout I don't know.*

They break all the rules. All the rules.

*Atticus Jem, go home, and take Scout and Dill home with you.*

*Son, I said, go home.*

*Jem No, sir.*

Atticus is raising them by giving them some freedom. And some opportunity to explore in a realm of ordered liberty. They have a kind of liberty... but he invests them with keen values. And the values that he invests them with are good information, And they see him living the values. So, they are able to run wild, run free they think they are but there's this kind of moral electronic gate that they are really bounded by Atticus' own high-mindedness. They are on an invisible leash... and go no farther. They don't stray from the moral strictures of Atticus' own conduct.

*Atticus Good night, Scout.*

*Scout Good night.*

I've never asked Harper, but her mother is never mentioned in the novel... and I'm going to be bold and try to find a way to get the presence of the mother in some way.

*Scout Was Mama pretty? Was Mama nice?*

Johnson The mother figure here... the one who operates, as the children's mother is a black woman.

**Ms. Badham** We had a Calpurnia, we had two as a matter of fact. We had Beedy and Frankie... who helped raise our family. For Beedy to take me

anywhere, we had to take the bus... because she didn't drive. Now, the fact that Beedy had to go to the back of the bus and I couldn't go back there... I had to stay in the section just before. And we'd have to ask people to move, so I could sit close to her. I had a real gut feeling that's not right, that's wrong. Why should she have to sit back there?

*Atticus* *What are you going to do with yourself this morning with both children at school?*

*Calpurnia* *I don't know and that's the truth.*

**Foote** What they did as servants mostly with enormous graciousness. And they were able to take on strange children and to be kind and loving to them. Clean the houses cook the meals. Paid very little, you know. And I often think back in awe of how little bitterness they had, or resentment. Whether it was hidden and we just didn't see it or recognize it, I don't know. But certainly as a child, I never felt it. I always felt, actually, more secure with certain black people than anybody I have ever felt secure with. Because I felt, if they gave their love to you and their devotion it was unstinting. I credit a lot of my beliefs, and my Christian upbringing, to Beedy and Frankie.

They were very much involved with the church. And seemed to know right from wrong. And what was proper and what wasn't proper for a young lady to do. And you didn't cross them. But there's a great love in that. A tough love that you really only learn to appreciate when you're older.

**Thomas** It is really sort of anti-domestic bias and blindness that wouldn't see Calpurnia to be an important alma mater. Giver of values, you know. Though Scout will not credit Atticus with teaching her anything she does credit Calpurnia with giving her the tablet in writing.

**Narrator** Ethics in the old South came from a variety of sources. All vaguely biblical and occasionally sensible. Honor was more important than life. And sport was more important than property. "Drink my whiskey, steal my wife -- but don't mess with my dog" was a common attitude. Which is why everybody had guns, to make sure everybody else was honorable. And to guarantee a full pantry.

*Walter* *My pa and I go hunting in our spare time.*

*Jem* *You've got a gun of your own? How long have you had a gun?*

I reckon there were a few people who carried guns at that time... but they would have been very few. There was some hunters but the hunting was not anything like the scale it is today. They were hunting for meat and not for sport, Most everybody had a gun at home in case you had a mad dog to shoot. Something like that.

**Johnson** The mad dog in the street seems to be a foreboding of evil. Something bad is going to follow this. And also it pre-figures Atticus' confrontation with the madness in his own community, exemplified by Bob Ewell. He's kind of the mad dog that Atticus then has to confront later on.

Jem is the one who is most affected by the events of the novel. Because he's emerging into adulthood. Scout is still fairly young. And he begins to encounter... the complexities and the darkness of this society.

*Atticus* *There's a lot of ugly things in this world, son. I wish I could keep them all away from you. That's never possible. Cal, you wait until I get Scout in bed. I'll drive you home.*

*Calpurnia* *Yes, sir.*

**Narrator** One should not be too young or too old before witnessing the fruits of one's surrounding abominations. Lynching of blacks had been common in the South and in Alabama for some time. So the air was heavy with anticipation.

*Jem* *Who's that in the car with Sheriff Tate?*

*Atticus* *Tom Robinson, son.*

[knocking on door]

**Footnote** And I didn't know quite how to, without melodramatically underscoring when Sheriff Tate comes over and solicits Atticus' help. How to do it? Then I thought, well, how did I use to hear things like that? And I thought of my childhood and being in that bed... and so I decided to try to do it from the point of view of the children overhearing it as much as being directly on the scene.

*Atticus* *I heard there might be trouble from that bunch out at Old Sarum.*

**A. B. Blass** It was a time of segregation and that was all we knew. We had a lot of blacks that came to our store to pay their bills on Saturday and they were scared to come in. Because the Klan was standing on each corner of the square up there at the courthouse and rode around town and came into town with lights on in their cars and also shining on their crosses. My father would try to explain to me when I would weep and say "Why?" What is the reason for this hatred? They haven't done anything. They are just black and we are white. And he would say, "These people is what we call poor white trash" which is, I guess, a prejudice of its own

"Need someone that they feel is lesser than them."

**Blass** We always had a Christmas parade... and we invited every band in the county... of which two were black. The Klan called me and says, "We are not going to have that black band," Of course not calling them "black." And I said, "Why not?" He said, "We are just not going to have it," And I said "Well, we plan to have them," So we went ahead with the plans but the Klan then threatened the band director the principal of the black schools that there will be bloodshed if you go through with this.

And my daughter, she said, "Daddy, what are we going to do?" I said, "We're not going to have a parade, either," I told her that in a town where there was hate Santa Claus would not come. Mr. Lee, was in the office just up the street and I remember him coming down

and then he said he talked real slow... he said, "Son," he says, "I know what you did and you did right," Says, "You did right," "You just stick to your guns."

*Walter Get aside from that door Mr. Finch.*

*AtticusWalter... I think you ought to turn right around and go back home.*

*Jem I can't see Atticus.*

**Ms. Badham** The actor that I had to kick in the leg. they made the mistake of telling me... that he had been an ex-motorcycle cop... and that one of his legs was bad... and you know, "kick his good leg,"

*Scout Hey, Atticus.*

**Ms. Badham** Wonderful creature that I was guess which leg I kicked?

*Scout Don't you touch him. Let him go!*

*Atticus That'll do, Scout.*

**Narrator** So she kicked the bad one?

**Alford** I can tell you why she did that. because Mary was a brat.

*Jem I can't stand it any longer. I'm going downtown to the courthouse to watch.*

*Scout You'd better not. You know what Atticus said.*

*Jem I don't care if he did. I'm not going to miss the most exciting thing that ever happened in this town.*

**Johnson** Jem also is the figure who is most deeply affected... by the trial of Tom Robinson. The most difficult sequence was the courtroom stuff. Particularly when a movie like *Mockingbird* is dependent on performance. Bob Mulligan along with Greg Peck... set the ambiance for all of us in terms of the atmosphere in which we worked. It took us two to three weeks to shoot the courtroom scene.

**Peck** When the picture began. Harper's father had passed away. And she gave me his watch. And I had noticed when I was in Monroeville... that he carried it in an old-fashioned way. Put through a buttonhole in his vest and the watch in one hand and the watch fob in the other. And he had a way of playing with it. And just holding that watch in his hand... and I stole that mannerism when I used it in the courtroom.

**Collin Paxton** In wardrobe at first they suggested high heels, and I said no. She wouldn't have any high heels. And if I have do have to wear high heels, if I've got to wear high heels then you have to let me wear them with socks. "Oh no," they said, "No one wears high heels with socks." "Oh yes they do where I'm from."

Then it was really important to me that my hair not be clean. Because Mayella's hair wouldn't be that clean. There wouldn't be time for doing for yourself. She was taking care of a whole passel of kids. She was being the mother, in more ways than one.

I saw these girls on the streets of violence, these very underprivileged girls. These girls from awful, awful backgrounds. I mean, most of them took it for granted they'd be molested by the time they were... certainly 12, by a father, an uncle, a brother... or someone down the road.

*Atticus* Is your father good to you? I mean, is he easy to get along with?

*Mayella* Does tolerable.

*Atticus* Except when he's drinking?

**Ms. Paxton** Imagine a child like that. She has been molested, sexually molested by her father. So, she is sexually awakened. Whatever else has happened, with no avenue nowhere to go with that. And here is a very attractive, very dignified, very kind... soft-spoken man. Black, maybe, but a man. And she is a young girl with hormones. And no she could never admit it.

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

**Ms. Paxton** Mayella was feeling enormous amounts of guilt. I might have.

*Atticus* But can you remember any other occasion?

*Mayella* No.

**Ms. Paxton** Because here was this gentle man that never did anything bad to anybody. And had been so nice to her so kind to her. She knows she's lying... and she's trapped up here. And that's her only defense. That's one of the reasons I went into this rather bizarre body language. She's a trapped animal. She's trapped in life. She's trapped by her conditioning. She's trapped by her own hatred and prejudice... and the poverty in which she lives. And she will never get out of it.

I remember at one point on the stand... looking at my father... and if there was any moment in which I might have, as the character... broken down and told the truth... it wouldn't happen. Because I looked at my daddy. 'Cause she'd know what'd happen to her when she got home... if she didn't perform well on the stand.

*Mayella* He took advantage of me. And if you fine, fancy gentlemen... ain't going to do nothing about it... then you're just a bunch of lousy, yellow, stinking cowards! The whole bunch of you! And your fancy airs don't come to nothing! Your "ma'aming" and your "Miss Mayella-ing"... it don't come to nothing, Mr. Finch!

**Ms. Paxton** The man who played my father... James Anderson scared me to pieces. Jim had had a hard life. He had lived a lot of that kind of world. I remember him looking right at my face. One of the first things he said after "Hello" was "I know that man."

*Bob Ewell* ...and I seen him with my Mayella.

**Brock Peters** It was almost a malevolence that he carried around on his shoulder. I never got to know him. I stayed out of his way because I was really afraid that... I wouldn't be able to take very much of the kind of attitude he projected... without getting into some real difficulties.

*Atticus I've been appointed to defend Tom Robinson. And now that he's been charged, that's what I intend to do.*

*Bob Ewell You're taking his--*

*Atticus If you'll excuse me, Mr. Ewell.*

**Peck** Jim was such a fine actor. He was so into the backwoods redneck.

*Bob Ewell What kind of man are you? You've got children of your own.*

**Peck** He despised me and I didn't think too much of him. He thought I was some kind of Hollywood leading man... that couldn't cut the mustard and really create a character.

*Atticus You've sworn to tell the whole truth. Will you do it?*

**Pakula** Brock has a God-like quality. You know, that voice, that face. He had a nobility about him that was quite remarkable. It certainly reinforced who was good and who was evil. Put Brock Peters and James Anderson side by side... it ain't very hard to know which is the good guy and which is the bad guy.

*Bailiff Do you swear to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?*

*Tom I do.*

*Bailiff Sit down, please.*

**Peters** This was a gentle person, kind man. He was not guilty... and there shouldn't be any aspect of a guilty person that appears there. What is so significant for the black viewer is that he is innocent. The fact that he's charged with something isn't a matter of great significance. We're just so delighted that he is not guilty. That it's so clear that he didn't do it. So he's a hero.

*Tom I was going home as usual that evening. When I passed the Ewell place... Miss Mayella was on the porch, like she said she was.*

**Brock** Bob worked very carefully with me... and I remember being frightened that I might not be able to deliver... what it was he asking for in terms of the depth of emotion... and the varieties of colors that he wanted to come out of me. And I don't remember the day that it happened or even the moment... but when I look back I remember there was! a time when finally, I saw it. And I literally was able to always go back to that place. And it was like a key and I could unlock it.

*Tom Mr. Finch. I got down off the chair and I turned around... and she sort of jumped on me.*

**Peck** Brock gave me a problem. Because when Brock started to tell his story of what really happened... he started to cry. And tears ran right down his face. And I found that I couldn't look him in the eye... because I started to choke up. So I resorted to looking past him... and that's the only way I could get through it. 'Cause you didn't want to have the witness and the lawyer... both crying at the same time, that wouldn't do.

**Peters** My life as an African-American or a black American... has had a lot of... horror, in terms of... racism, you know. I have been kicked, beaten. I have seen the worst of it. I guess I have been fortunate in being able to step back from the brink... of an anger that would engulf me... and cause my life to go in a really downward spiral. The anger, the frustration... the isolation... that one could experience and often did experience... was an easy place for me to get to, to tap... to use in my performance.

*DA Did all that for not one penny.*

*Tom Yes, sir. I felt right sorry for her. She seemed....*

**Johnson** It was an unforgivable sentiment.

*DA You felt sorry for her? A white woman?*

It's what finally damns him... in the eyes of the Old Sarum jury.

*Atticus And so... a quiet, humble, respectable Negro... who has had the unmitigated temerity... to feel sorry for a white woman....*

Atticus is tolerant of all the people. The poor blacks, the poor whites, the uneducated... and what we see there is this notion of noblesse oblige. And a significant point is that Atticus suffers everybody. He is peerless, but everyone is his peer. And that Atticus teaches us is what it is to be peerless. If you are peerless, if you really are... as important and wonderful and bright as you think you are... then the world is your peer, all of it. You can deal with everybody, every kind, every color, every size.

*Atticus The witnesses for the State... with the exception of the sheriff of Maycomb County have presented themselves to you gentlemen, to this court in the cynical confidence that their testimony would not be doubted... confident that you gentlemen would go along with them on the assumption, the evil assumption, that all Negroes lie... all Negroes are basically immoral beings... all Negro men are not to be trusted around our women. An assumption that one associates with minds of their caliber.*

What's a black man with a Ph.D.? A nigger. So, if you can take this... group of people, this race of people... and make the whole race a class, make their color... an inescapable badge of inferiority... that no amount of refinement or attainment would let you escape... then you provide security to people. And so that was the point he was trying to make... where you try to demonize a group. That these are always going to be an inferior group of people.

*Atticus The defendant is not guilty... but somebody in this courtroom is.*

**Peck** One thing I always had to do was keep a rein on my emotions. Because Atticus was not a fellow to be demonstrative and to let his emotions slop over, so to speak. I think that particular morning, I was more than ready to do this scene and I think I overdid it.

And I got about halfway through this 10-minute scene and Mulligan said, "Hold on, hold on." With all that adrenaline running, and here

was this key moment. It's Atticus trying to save this man's life. All of those thoughts and all of that energy, being funneled into those few moments onscreen could be too much.

*Atticus In the name of God... do your duty.*

**Thomas** When you recall it, is it Gregory Peck or is it Lincoln that I am recalling? He just embodied such decency and goodness and wisdom. I don't know whether I wanted to be a lawyer before or after that, but I am sure subconsciously, at least, seeing that movie had something to do with my wanting to be a lawyer.

*Judge Will the defendant please rise and face the jury?*

*Foreman We find the defendant guilty as charged.*

**Peters** The actor has the foreknowledge that his character is doomed. But also human beings sometimes have that foreknowledge. I worked with that as an aspect of the performance that needed to be seen before he disappeared from the courtroom scene.

*Atticus Tom.*

**Bernstein** When the trial is over and the black people who are in the gallery... up above stand, and there was just a little touch of music at that point. Also melancholy. Because after all, it did come to a rather melancholy ending, that trial.

As we lawyers talk to each other and talk about ourselves talk to ourselves about what we ought to be and the level of ethics that we should aspire to and the way we want the public to see us. The speeches end -- those speeches end with the line, "Stand up, Scout, your daddy's passing." And it's adapted to say, "Stand up, a lawyer is passing." That we want to be lawyers in such a way... that the public will react to us... the way the balcony reacted to Atticus. So it really is a standard of what we want to be... and the way we want the public to react to us.

*Rev. Sykes Miss Jean Louise? Stand up. Your father's passing.*

**Peck** There is a line from a speech of Churchill... that contains the words,  
Withhold no sacrifice  
Grudge no toil  
Seek no sordid gain  
Fear no foe  
All will be well

Those words seem, in a way, to be a code that Atticus lived by.

*Maudie There are some men in this world... who were born to do our unpleasant jobs for us. Your father's one of them.*

**Thomas** What Atticus shows us is being a gentleman is all of the good things that are left when all the money is gone.

It is the ability to have had and to have lost and to realize that all is not lost and that what is left is perhaps far more significant than what you lost. His life shows that I am that light that must shine.

We have a saying in our fundamentalist Church, "Some people would rather see a sermon than hear one," And in Atticus we see a sermon and what an eloquent one it is.

*Atticus Tom Robinson is dead.*

Tom Robinson's running, as rational as that was... it was an act of hopelessness. And how reason and hopelessness can be synonymous. And we see lurking here, this hope that we know... is worthy of the risk... that he should not have ran. We believe. I believe... that there was reason for this hope.

*Atticus The last thing I told him was not to lose heart that we'd ask for an appeal.*

**Thomas** The mistake is to despair when despair is rational. That the despair was not irrational but it was morally wrong and probably a misjudgment.

*Atticus We had such a good chance.*

**Thomas** That no matter how bad things are that there is hope...

*Atticus We had more than a good chance.*

**Thomas** ...that there is somebody there for you. And that you can go on if you'll believe in the people... who are there for you.

**Peck** I get letters from school teachers. One boy wrote an answer to the question, "What was your favorite scene?" He said "I like the scene where Bob Ewell spit in Atticus' face." Well, that got my attention... and I read on, and... I realized that the boy really did get the point. Because Atticus had told his kids:

*"Look, I'm going to be doing something unpopular in this town. I'm defending a black man, he's innocent but it's not going to be popular with a lot of people in this town.*

*You're gonna be tormented in school, people are gonna call you names... maybe they will start fights, but I don't want you to fight. I don't care what the reasons are. I forbid you to fight."*

**Peck** This is something I have to do. If I want to look myself in the face in the morning when I shave. So the boy says?. "That's why." He says, "Atticus could have clobbered Bob Ewell if he wanted to but he was setting a good example for his kids."

**Alford** Real courage is being able to stand up in the face of the most horrendous adversity and still keep your dignity. I think that's what Jem learns. He learns courage, he learns dignity...and he learns the value of his family.

**Narrator** Only one cultural artifact superseded family and hospitality... the Southern cracker. Bob Ewell was the twisted decayed remnant of these lively braggarts... of Scotch-Irish descent... who never let business interfere with amusements. Who believed there was luck in leisure. Who despised machines and money and ambition. And who dueled at the hint of an insult... thereby encouraging courtesy and

refinement. Personal injuries were always, without exception, settled privately. Atticus possessed all the graces of the old South. But he replaced indolence and violence with education and law.

Appropriately, the harvest festival brought out the goblins... of the cracker's despair. Perhaps as a final test for the faith of Atticus Finch.

*Jem Scout?*

*Scout Yeah?*

*Jem Will you come on? Everybody's gone!*

**Bernstein** When they're walking along the road. it starts with the theme. And it gets scarier and scarier. This is no longer the mystery of Boo Radley. And it's very unlikely to be Boo Radley. It's not gothic anymore. This is for real.

**Alford** When he first attacks us and knocks her against the tree... then he and I grapple around for a few seconds. And then I run over and try to get her... and he grabs me by the hair and yanks me back out of the scene. That is not a fake. That is probably the reason why I've got this now. So he and I fought for two days. There was a lot more of the fight filmed than actually shown in the movie.

**Robert Duvall** Maybe he sensed, he knew something was up. So he was gonna protect those kids. He doesn't know what the repercussions might be. What does he care? It's instinct to save them.

**Blass** Son Bola was his name. He and his mother would come out at night about ten, ten-thirty... which was late then. There was one little street lamp out there. And they would work in the garden.

*Jem Judging from his tracks, he's about 6' 6" tall. There's a long, jagged scar that runs all the way across his face.*

?? Well, I did see him one time later on... as I got older, probably the 11th grade. We sold the people a radio and at that time you had to put an antenna out in the tree. My dad was putting the radio over in the bedroom and he said, "Now, son you go through that door with the wire and hook it up on the tree." And Miss Bola said "Let me open the door for you." When she opened the door, I ran right into... Son, who's later called Boo. And he scared me to death. He was about six feet I suppose, But he was' white. I remember he was so white because he didn't go out in the daytime.

**Mulligan** I'll never forget the day I saw Bob Duvall walk on the set in wardrobe. In full costume with the ragged shirt and the baggy pants... and the old worn work shoes. He had dyed his hair white... and it just stunned me. He was very pale, There was no makeup. And there was Boo. When that door goes back like this there's a light thing. It's light. Hurts the guy's eyes a little bit. And from there just... examine the room from his hermetic position.

**Pakula** Fantasizing about Boo Radley. The whole concept of Boo Radley. Fears with which we titillate ourselves with, boogeymen... ends

with, "Hey, Boo." And all the fears of this unknown character. Going from that to, "This is the man who saves their lives."

*Scout Hey, Boo.*

**Peck** That's a lesson in screen-writing that he was able to convey so much in a glance of shyness... of awkwardness... of some kind of deep affection for the child. Being exposed to other people. And he's a recluse. All those things he conveyed with the most subtle expression. And really it came from deep inside of Bob.

**Duvall** You can't push that stuff along. It's very delicate stuff. You gotta be very careful with it. Especially with Horton, the material is very delicate... like sandpiper prints, you know.

*Scout You can pet him, Mr. Arthur. He's asleep. You couldn't if he was awake, though. He wouldn't let you.*

**Duvall** As I touched that boy, I got goose pimples. I knew I was on the right track. I could do nothing wrong at that point, if I had that going on.

*Atticus Thank you, Arthur.*

**Thomas** As we talk about the prosecution of Boo Radley... Atticus' role changes from that of a defense lawyer...

*Atticus Thank you for my children.*

...to the benign figure of the State legislator...the state official that decides when the power of the state ought to be used. And we as individuals... have to make sure that we don't... characterize those people in a pejorative way. And say they're soft on crime. It's one of his most unselfish and heroic acts. In that he gives up what means most to him, for Boo.

The novel is a love story, a love song. Harper Lee is able to speak not just for... those people who are so silenced... in this story, like Arthur Radley. But she's able to sing the song to and for Atticus... and to and for Jem... and for the other members of the community. The novel itself is the mockingbird's song. One really feels that at the end... as she's standing on the Radley front porch, looking at her world as Arthur Radley might have seen it.

**Ms. Badham** There's a lot of hope in this whole story. Hope for a better future. An understanding that the children finally come to about... the reality of the world. And how they have to take what life gives them. Somehow using these experiences... to better not only their own lives but the lives around them.

**Pakula** It is a childhood we all wanted to have and most of us didn't. We are rooted in a street where we know everybody. We feel free to live our own mystery world, now we're protected by this ideal father. And it's become as much as a part of the American mythos as Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer. It's the triumph of Harper. And I think the triumph of the film is it did capture the soul of that book.

*Scout (from the book) He would be in Jem's room all night... and he would be there when Jem waked up in the morning.*

**Narrator** Is it a fantasy? A cloud full of truth and possibility? Or is it a dusty old hope chest... reeking of mildew and ancient love?

**Alford** I've read a survey, not long ago. that said that next to the Bible... *To Kill a Mockingbird* is the most important book in people's lives.

**Thomas** The book is a story of a Southern childhood and a way of life. But perhaps, we should take heart... from the fact that that way of life itself was imperfect. And look what it produced. I mean what should be heartening is the very imperfection... of the times... and the community out of which came this wonderful story... and this wonderful book. Which give us hope to go on. Not a duty to maintain Monroeville as a museum.

**Narrator** Nothing exists of Maycomb anymore. The approach to town from the highway is a thoroughfare adorned by necklaces of fast-food establishments, tire stores, shopping strips, and one of the finest restaurants in town, which is not saying much, called Radley's.

The land where the Lee, Falk and Bowler homes stood is commercial fodder like any other -- ill-used and hard to look at. The Falk home was just recently destroyed despite the renown of that wild young boy brimming with fantasy and fancy clothes, known as Truman. An historic landmark, however anchors the memory of his glory. for those who need signs for the promised land.

Not long ago the main road into town was called Alabama Avenue. And folks like the Lees lived peacefully beside it. Children played all around and over it. Knowing, and yet unaware, that it was a gentle river... bearing neighbors and commerce and the future.

Tourists learned that the old courthouse is preserved as museum and they come... from places Bob Ewell and Boo Radley never heard of. They come by the thousands as if the song of the mockingbird could be heard in an old building where even memories lack music.

The local population slowly changes with the country when it comes to gadgets... impatience, crime and self-absorption. Thankfully, the food and the music and perhaps even a few vital customs are recognizable.

A fool might ask, "Where have all the characters gone?" Well, it would be a canvas hardly worth painting, but perhaps worth sketching. If only to enable us to clarify these specters. Which is what we claim when we possess a work of art.

Mrs. Dubose would certainly be sued by at least one neighbor for defamation of character. And is her confederate pistol licensed? Boo would be taken from his parents' asylum and institutionalized. Then set free long before he was ready. Mayella and Bob Ewell would appear on a talk show about incest in the Piney Wood South. They would weep and exclaim most vividly that there is no love like family.

In small towns there was enormous interest in the foibles of our neighbors. And they were discussed. Not publicly, but what's amazing to me is that now everybody wants to get up and talk about it. It used to be what was talked about by other people observing it. Now it's the ones that are doing the acts, they want to get up and say, "I'm this and I'm that" ... and you know.... I don't know I have watched those silly shows in the afternoon... a couple of times, and they are so appalling to me. That I just, really, I get despair for my nation.

**Narrator** Would Tom Robinson receive a fair trial? More than likely. for ignorance and cruelty cannot stay in the same place forever. There has been a vast improvement in the ability to get a fair trial in the South and what is perhaps ironic is now, often, if you are a black defendant, particularly if there is black victim, your defense counsel may want to strike the black jurors. So not only are there numerous black jurors in the jury pool, you may find black lawyers actually striking black jurors because they feel they will be more likely to convict the defendant. There has been enormous progress in that regard.

**Narrator** How often does a pocket Merlin come our way? And what happens when he grows large enough to climb into the jaws of experience? Perhaps Dill did not turn out to be Truman after all. Jem is that part of all men who mirror the virtues of their fathers, following in those giant footprints. Standing up to a world gone mad with litigation lies and tomorrow. And then there is Scout, forever more at home on the Radley porch than on the various stages of common perspective. She forges her own trail. Skipping along to the tunes of Dill, Tom, Jem... Calpurnia and Atticus. She does not change to fit the world. She is the sum of all her stories. World without end. Where is Atticus Finch today? Where are his successors? Not the mere figures of our vampire imagination but the inheritors of his mantle. Who do we think he is? And where on earth if at all... would he flourish?

**Thomas** It may be that Atticus is now a judge rather than a lawyer. It may be that the great challenge to vindicate rights in the '90s are done by people on the bench, that have the courage to vindicate the constitution whether it was on the issue of prayer in schools or some very unpopular issues.

The challenge with being an Atticus now is with the aggregation of finances the corporitization of America. Atticus is now Atticus Inc. Characters like Atticus Finch are out of style these days. People who believe in living by the golden rule people who don't seek the almighty buck people who are concerned about their community and care about the people in their community.

**Ida Gaillard** I trade with a small grocery store. most of the time. But I know everybody in there and they know me. I can go in the larger ones and they just check me out of [there]. Say, "Could I help you," if you're wanting something. They don't know who you are. I just don't like to go into those larger stores.

Grocery stores. I like to feel like I'm a part of them. Sometimes I'm not so sure that we are better off as a people, as a society, as a community than we were 50 or 100 years ago.

One of the clerks in the Lazenby Store, starting maybe at 7:00 in the morning, would call his customers. He'd call my mama and say "Mrs. Barney, what do you need this morning?" And when she told him then he would call somebody else. And they would work those orders up... and in a matter of an hour or two hours... they would have been delivered to the back door of the home.

I didn't know that we're ending up the century in a blaze of glory. We've got a very long way to go. You've got to have people around you that are guiding you in the right direction just like her dad did her and my dad did me.

And we grew up knowing that right was right and wrong was wrong. There wasn't anywhere in between. You either did right or you didn't. And I think most of the South was that way.

**Thomas** I am responsible for my life. And the lives of the young ones... that I'm given charge of in my household. And the certainty of my faith is this, if I don't waste the opportunities that I am given... the talents that I am given... if I dispense one man's portion... of kindness and decency, then all will be all right. Because I'm not so solitary. There's nothing so wonderful and unique and distinct about me. I know that. And, so if I just do my part... the world won't go to hell in the bucket. What paralyzes you... is taking on the responsibility of trying to make the whole world that way. I mean, heavens! I'll not do that. But we can keep the flame alive. We can keep stoking the fires, and that's all we are obliged to do.

**Narrator** We must keep just one eye on the new pillars of society. Those feckless overachievers who are shaped by the prevailing wind and who cast a shadow well beyond the size of their hearts and minds. There is a thread soft as night and bright as sunlight reaching back through all places and all events that must be fortified or we lose sight of ourselves and our neighbors.

Maycomb is a beautiful spider spinning that thread inside the hearts of those characters and that society, sits a flame, specifically ours, enduring all futility except forgetting and conceit.

Maycomb is oxygen and it guides us through the forests of experience so that we can fully contribute to the feast of characters. It offers time to know what's out there and what's in there. Time to imagine the necessary door.

It was a general feeling that everybody helped everybody. There were a few people that had a little more money a little more than the average. But they were few. And those who didn't have they didn't think they were underprivileged. We didn't know there was a poverty line. And most people had a garden. And if you had a garden and your neighbor didn't well, you told your neighbor to come help themselves.

I had a little old portable Victrola and we played these little plastic discs on it. Records. And I'd take that up on Friday night... and the kids would come down and dance up the hall. And we had a good time... with that little old scratchy-sounding Victrola. Norman was talking about that not long ago... about those little discs that would come out. Little records. I've got a bunch of them even now. Just curiosity.

But Norman was one of them who would come down here to dance. Says there was a lady that lived downtown and we'd fill her car up. She had several girls. And she'd pick up a bunch of young folks and bring them down here... on Friday night to dance.

Before Monroe had an undertaker that was the --You sold caskets but there was no embalming. If a person died, there were certain people in town who knew how and they took care of dressing the person. The casket was delivered to the house and the body lay in state in the house until it was carried either to the church or to the cemetery. Law enforcement is different. We have good law enforcement here, I think. We've gone from having 10 or 12 to 15. I had one back there when this book was written. It was one policeman, one sheriff, one deputy. And that was it.

Jail was right next to my store. Many times, we'd go over help hold the door open for the sheriff to go in and out. Help him, 'cause he didn't have anybody to help him when he'd bring food in. His wife cooked the food. He brought it in and handed it to them. It was better than [what] I ate, a lot of it was.