

SCOUT (*coming down off the porch*). I'd like to find the Cunningham boy right now! Ain't everybody's daddy the deadeast shot in Maycomb County.

JEM (*following her*). I reckon if he'd wanted us to know, he'da told us.

SCOUT. Maybe it just slipped his mind.

JEM. Naw, it's something you wouldn't understand. (*Blazing with this new pride*.) We don't have to talk about it any mor'n he does—but we know! (*To the sky*.)

An' I don't care if he's a hundred years old!

SCOUT (*calling out*). Hey, Mrs. Dubose! Did you see my father—

MRS. DUBOSE. Don't say 'hey' to me, you ugly girl! You say 'Good afternoon, Mrs. Dubose.' You should be in a dress and camisole, young lady. If somebody doesn't change your ways, you'll grow up waiting on tables. A Finch waiting on tables at the O.K. Cafe—hah! (*SCOUT, upset, reaches out and takes JEM's hand*.) SCOUT (*frightened and hurt, hushed aside*). What's the matter with her? Why's she so hateful?

JEM (*aside to her, whispering*). Come on, Scout. Don't pay any attention. Just hold your head high—be a gentleman. (*SCOUT decides to make the effort, and THEY start walking again. However MRS. DUBOSE will not let them alone.*)

MRS. DUBOSE. A lovelier lady than your mother never lived. It's shocking the way Atticus Finch lets her children run wild. (*JEM hesitates.*)

SCOUT (*whispering*). I'm with you.

JEM (*whispering back*). We'll keep walking.

MRS. DUBOSE. Not only a Finch waiting on tables, but one in the courthouse, lawing for niggers! (*JEM, stung hard, stops short.*)

SCOUT (*whispering anxiously*). Let's keep goin', Jem. MRS. DUBOSE (*as SHE's going back inside*). What's the world come to with the Finches going against their raising? (*Her parting shot.*) Your father's no better than the trash he works for! He's a nigger lover! (*With this SHE completes her exit, leaving SCOUT hurt and JEM stunned.*)

JEM (*gasping*). I'll—I'll fix her!

SCOUT. Hold your head high, Jem, an'—

JEM. She has no right—

SCOUT (*trying to hold him*). Jem—

JEM (*shoving her hands away*). Just because Atticus—I'm sick and tired—everybody—everybody! (*JEM races up onto MRS. DUBOSE's porch, where HE starts tearing up the potted flowers there.*)

SCOUT (*frantic*). Jem! Come back!

JEM (*shouting back*). Go home! Stay outa this! (*As the shocked SCOUT feels her way back toward her porch, JEM turns, having completed the destruction of MRS. DUBOSE's porch flowers, and rushes off, apparently intent on further objects for his fury.*)

SCOUT (*after him; a cry*). Jem!

(*But JEM, past hearing, has gone. Frightened, SCOUT goes back onto her porch, from where SHE watches anxiously. DILL, dressed in different clothes—dusty and untidy—comes on.*)

DILL (*subdued*). Hey, Scout.

SCOUT (*DILL's presence only half-registering*). Jem's outa control! He's gone mad! (*Looking back.*) He's knocking the tops off every camellia bush Mrs. Dubose owns!