

MISS MAUDIE (*front*). Alabama must be playing in the Rose Bowl with Jem Finch scoring a touchdown. (*She exits.*)

MRS. DUBOSE (*calling to him sharply*). Where are you going this time of the day, Jeremy Finch? Playing hooky, I suppose. I'll just call up the principal and tell him.

JEM. Aw, it's Saturday, Mrs. Dubose.

MRS. DUBOSE. I wonder if your father knows where you are?

JEM. 'Course he does.

MRS. DUBOSE. Miss Maudie told me you broke down her scuppernong arbour this morning. She's going to tell your father and then you'll wish you'd never seen the light of day!

JEM (*indignant*). I haven't been near her scuppernong arbour.

MRS. DUBOSE. Don't you contradict me! (*With MRS. DUBOSE calling after him, JEM puts his head down and plunges through the center of the opposing team and bulls his way offstage. MRS. DUBOSE after him.*) If you aren't sent to reform school before next week, my name's not Dubose.

SCOUT (*to herself*). Why's she so mean?

(*Over the end of the above, the sound of a hymn being sung offstage gradually swells. REVEREND SYKES, a Negro minister, is coming on, possibly followed by a few of the SINGERS, members of his church.*)

MRS. DUBOSE (*sternly*). Reverend Sykes, please. You must confine your choir to the colored church.

REVEREND SYKES. Excuse us, Mrs. Dubose. We're making a special visit to our parishioners. (*Calling.*) Miss Cal?

(*Amoyed at the singing, MRS. DUBOSE goes inside. CALPURNIA comes out.*)

CALPURNIA. Afternoon, Reverend Sykes.

REVEREND SYKES. It's about Brother Tom Robinson's trouble. We have to do more for his wife and children.

CALPURNIA. Yes, Reverend.

REVEREND SYKES. These are dark days. Days of trials and tribulations. (*The singing begins to swell again.*)

MISS MAUDIE (*has come out to listen.*)

CALPURNIA. Yes, Reverend.

REVEREND SYKES. The collection for the next three Sundays will go to his wife.

CALPURNIA (*nodding with the music*). Yes.

REVEREND SYKES. Please encourage everyone to bring what they can. Everyone!

SCOUT. Why are you taking up a collection for Tom Robinson's wife?

REVEREND SYKES. To tell the truth, Helen's finding it hard to get work these days.

SCOUT. I know Tom Robinson's done something awful, but why won't folks hire Helen?

REVEREND SYKES. Folks aren't anxious to—(*He hesitates as he sees someone entering. Continuing, dropping his voice.*)—to have anything to do with his family.

(*MAYELLA EWELL has entered, followed by her father, BOB EWELL.*)