

JUDGE TAYLOR. Quiet! There has been a request that this courtroom be cleared of spectators, or at least of women and children—a request that for the time being will be denied. People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for. And they have the right to make whatever decisions they consider best for their children. You may feel there's something here to be learned. Or you may decide you do not wish to face this problem. It's up to you to make the decision. I suggest you do it right now. I'm interrupting this trial for a ten-minute recess. (*The JUDGE bangs the gavel and rises. As HE does—*)

LIGHTS DIM OUT

END OF ACT ONE

MR. GILMER (*calling*). Mayella Violet Ewell. (*As MAYELLA approaches, the COURT CLERK administers the oath.*)

CLERK. Swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

MAYELLA (*nodding softly*). Yes. (*MAYELLA sits.*)

MR. GILMER. Please tell the jury in your own words what happened on the evening of November twenty-first. (*MAYELLA does not reply.*) Where were you at dusk on that evening?

MAYELLA. On the porch.

MR. GILMER (*trying to prod her along*). What were you doing on the porch? (*MAYELLA hesitates.*)

JUDGE TAYLOR. Just tell us what happened. You can do that, can't you? (*MAYELLA does not reply.*) What are you scared of? (*MAYELLA whispers something to him from behind her hand.*) What was that?

MAYELLA (*pointing to ATTICUS*). Him. Don't want him doin' me like he done Papa, makin' him out left-handed.

JUDGE TAYLOR (*perplexed*). How old are you?

MAYELLA. Nineteen-and-a-half.

JUDGE TAYLOR. I see. Well, Mr. Finch has no idea of scaring you, and if he did, I'm here to stop him. Now sit up straight and tell us what happened. (*MAYELLA takes a breath, and starts nervously.*)

MAYELLA. Well—I was on the porch 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 wasn't feelin' strong enough then, so he came by—

MR. GILMER. Who is 'he'?

MAYELLA. That'n yonder. Robinson.

MR. GILMER. Then what happened?