

Keep Your Head High

By: Reverend Sykes



Ladies and gentlemen, brothers and sisters; we have all experienced a very traumatic event concerning our dear fellow, Tom Robinson. This has truly shake up our community like never before and I believe we all need to stay calm and peaceful- despite what you might want to do. This must be done in order to keep everybody in our family safe and sane. We are all in this together. As you well know, Tom was (wrongly) convicted of raping Mayella Ewell. Tom Robinson is a kind and respectable man. Almost every single day, when Tom passed by the Ewell residence, he would go out of his way and help Mayella with whatever help she might need. Not once did he deny her of his help because she was white, annoying, or for any other reason. He was polite and gentle with her. In short, Tom respected her in every possible way, and did not deserve what she and her father did to him.

Let's take a short step back just to refresh our memories of the events that led up to this tragedy. One day in November of last year, Tom entered the Ewell residence to help her with something that supposedly needed fixing. Yet when he came into the house, there was nothing to be fixed or built so Mayella had him stand up on a chair and get a box down from a spot that she couldn't reach on her own. Then, Mayella hugged and kissed Tom, against his desires. Then, Bob Ewell returned home and saw what Mayella had been doing to Tom. Tom ran away as soon as he saw Mr. Ewell. After that, it can be assumed that Bob Ewell beat Mayella and then charged Tom with raping his daughter. That is what got us here today; to recovering from the murder of our close friend, Tom. Now, more than ever, we need to keep our heads high and and stay calm. Our lives will get more difficult and stressful, nevertheless change will come to us soon and we need to be strong for each other. Continued on page 3...

*Tom Robinson- a
man of kindness
and compassion.
He will always be
remembered.
May God watch
over his soul,
amen.*

Keep Your Head High (continued)

Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure you all know Mr. Link Deas. Mr. Deas is still helping and supporting our community and friends. He has graciously blessed Helen Robinson with work when no one else would employ her. Life has been rough on Helen and her family, and without work she would not be able to support her family. Mr. Deas is a respectable and kind white man and if he is promoting our rights and values, equality is not too far away. Another respectable and popular white man in Maycomb county is Judge Taylor. This brilliant man has a special kind of respect from all of the community. As anybody who witnessed the end of the trial noticed, Judge Taylor was no more thrilled about the verdict of the jury than you or I. There is hope coming our way! Don't you see? Judge Taylor clearly felt that the verdict was unfair and this means we have the support of a highly regarded white man.

Finally, there is a man who is influential, respectful, and brilliant and we all know of this man. Whenever you think that all hope is lost for us, the black community, think of our dearest friend-Atticus Finch. Mr. Finch has stood by us through everything, and has never once asked for anything in return. Though he was not able to ensure innocence for Tom, Mr. Finch put forth the best proof and support that he could and he gave Tom the best trial he would have ever gotten. *I know* that Mr. Finch will help us reach a new level of respect from our fellow Maycombers, even if only by a small fraction.

I am speaking directly to you at this moment. You might want to stop working and supporting your family because you think that nothing will ever change for us and that our lives will stay so unequal forever. But do *not* think this way! I promise to you that change is on the horizon, it is within our grasp!! What I need from you is to continue supporting one another and to never *ever* give up hope. This is a critical time for each and every one of us and without the help and support that we offer each other, we would stay in the same predicament forever and ever! So, I beg you, stay calm and supportive of each other through this grave time.

Finally, I wish to leave you with one last thought. Though it is not required of us, I know you all have empathy and pity for Mayella in your true, Christian hearts. She is a helpless and lonely young lady who needed all of the love she could get. You mustn't despise her for what she did; on the contrary, you ought to have sympathy for her! She was just seeking care and attention that nobody in her home would ever give to her. Tom was, indeed, one of the victims in this situation but Mayella is definitely a victim as well. She is a victim because she has suffered a life of coldness and adversity, just like you or me.

Thank you so much for staying so strong for each other and especially for the Robinson family during the tragic time. I trust that every single one of you will make the right decisions and act like honest and caring individuals. *Amen.*