



# Go Set a Watchman

## Harper Lee

### Discussion Questions

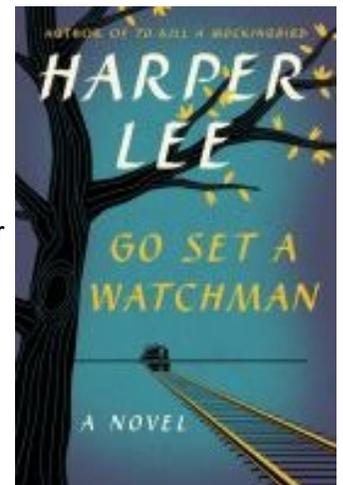
1. *Go Set a Watchman* takes place more than twenty years after *To Kill a Mockingbird* begins. When *Watchman* opens, Jean Louise Finch—now twenty-six and living in the North, in New York City—is returning to her hometown of Maycomb, Alabama. Describe the Maycomb of *Go Set a Watchman*. If you have read *Mockingbird*, has the town changed in the intervening years? If so, how?

2. Maycomb is a town without train service, and its bus service “was erratic and seemed to go nowhere.” How does this lack of connection isolate the citizens of Maycomb, and how does that isolation affect how they see themselves and outsiders? Early in the novel, her longtime friend Henry Clinton tells her “you’re gonna see Maycomb change its face completely in our lifetime.” What does he foresee that Jean Louise cannot—or perhaps does not want to see?

3. Think about the extended Finch family. What is their status in Maycomb? What is the significance of being a Finch in this small Southern town? Does it afford them privileges—as well as expectations of them and responsibilities—that other families do not share? Do the Finches have freedoms that others do not enjoy?

5. Describe the Jean Louise Finch of *Watchman*. How does this grown-up woman compare to her younger self? How does Jean Louise conform—or not—to the ideal of womanhood in the 1950s? What was that ideal? Compare her to her Aunt Alexandra and the women of Maycomb. Does she fit in with these women? What did you learn about them at the Coffee social that Aunt Alexandra hosts in Jean Louise’s honour?

6. Describe the relationship between Jean Louise and Atticus at the beginning of the novel. Does Jean Louise idealize her father too much? How does she react when she discovers that her father is a flawed human being? How does this discovery alter her sense of herself, her family, and her world? By the novel’s end, how do father and daughter accommodate each other?





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## Harper Lee

### About the Author

Harper Lee, known to friends and family as Nelle, was born in the small southwestern Alabama town of Monroeville, Alabama, on April 28, 1926, the youngest of four children. As a child, Lee was a tomboy and a precocious reader, and enjoyed the friendship of her schoolmate and neighbour, the young Truman Capote.

Published July 11, 1960, *To Kill a Mockingbird* was an immediate bestseller and won her great critical acclaim, including the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1961. It remains a bestseller today, with over 30 million copies in print. In 1999, it was voted "Best Novel of the Century" in a poll conducted by the *Library Journal*.

On February 3, 2015, it was announced that HarperCollins would publish *Go Set a Watchman*, which includes versions of many of the characters in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. According to a HarperCollins press release, it was originally thought that the *Watchman* manuscript was lost. The book was published to controversy in July, 2015, as a sequel to *To Kill a Mockingbird*, though it has been confirmed to be only the first draft of the latter, with many narrative incongruities, repackaged and released as a completely separate work.

Harper Lee died on February 19, 2016, at the age of 89.

**This book is available for download as an eBook and an eAudiobook. For more information, please visit [lpl.overdrive.com](http://lpl.overdrive.com) or call 519-661-4600.**