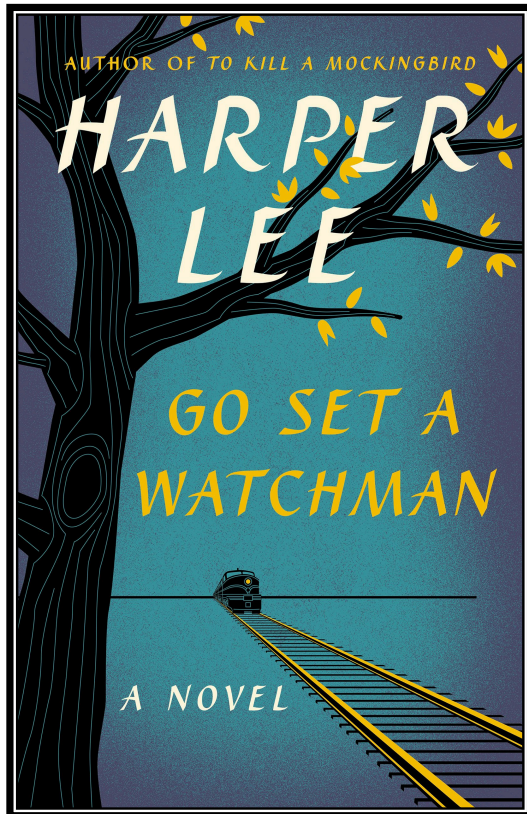


## *Tomboy Meets World*



*Go Set a Watchman* by Harper Lee is the sequel to the beloved *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Taking place twenty years after the events of its prequel, the novel again focuses on Jean-Louise “Scout” Finch, who believes her hometown is incapable of change until she witnesses something that will shatter her snug world.

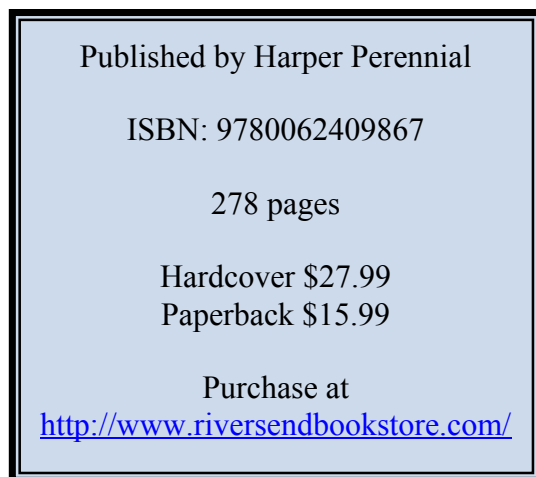
Scout meanders her way through Maycomb in both past and present, trying to come to grips with the changes taking place around her, but the question remains - has anything really changed?

**“...a recurring story as old as time: the chapter which concerned her began two hundred years ago and was played out in proud society the bloodiest war and harshest peace in modern history could not destroy...”**

Through her amazing and timeless characters, Harper Lee takes a close look at the traditions and history of the South while capturing what it means to be a part of that legacy. Scout has grown up and now needs to cope with the change of time that must affect us all. She wrestles with herself between being the lovable tomboy and growing into a sophisticated southern woman. While dealing with the changes in herself, she must cope with her brother’s

death, Atticus's illness, and the transformations that have taken place in the people of Maycomb since the war. It's not the same town with the same locals anymore, but one characteristic has stayed the same. There are still those who look down upon the Negroes [sic] in town and those who choose to help them along. With the changes since the war, the divide between black and white is growing wider. Atticus is again at the forefront, but not necessarily as a hero this time around. As Scout witnesses her friends and family breaking apart in this division she begins to wonder if everything she ever believed about her family's fight for justice was a lie.

Much like the story within, this book also has an interesting history. This is the first novel Harper Lee ever wrote. Long before her hit *To Kill a Mockingbird* came *Go Set a Watchman*. Her editor loved the story, but he wanted to see a younger version of the characters and more about the story she alluded to. When *To Kill a Mockingbird* became a hit, there were issues over who owned the rights to *Go Set a Watchman*. It was placed in a vault and more or less



forgotten about while its counterpart became a literary star. In 2014 it was rediscovered and immediately requests were made for it to be published. Harper Lee was 87 when she gave permission for her first novel to be published and passed away shortly after. Sometimes books take the long road to publication, but it doesn't mean they're

not worth the wait.

The writing rings true to Harper Lee's earlier work, but there are significant changes that at times become muddled and confused. Much of what is understood comes directly from Scout's mind and at times it's difficult to grasp what is truly happening. Whereas in the previous

book Scout is an innocent witness, this is no longer the case. As a grown woman, Scout is full of opinions and less willing to let others sway her – this makes things difficult for the reader as other characters attempt to explain tradition and Scout’s train of thought pushes to an abrupt stop the moment she doesn’t want to hear something. This made it tricky for the reader to understand what was going on and what other characters were explaining because as a narrator Scout did not finish a thought that didn’t agree with her own opinion. She gave no time for the reader to come to our own conclusion on the wisdom she received. Even with this change in narration, *Go Set A Watchman* remains a meaningful sequel to the life of Scout Finch.

Harper Lee was an inspiring writer who went on to win a Pulitzer Prize among other honorary degrees. Rarely did she arrive in person to accept these honors. She went on to lead a life surrounded by family rather than fame, but this does not mean she lived quietly. Harper Lee makes a final impression on us in her “last” novel, *Go Set a Watchman*.



*Gabrielle Darling is a bookworm and dog-lover. She has published one non-fiction piece and continues to develop her skills because there’s no better pastime than writing.*