

Discovering My Watchman:

A Review of Harper Lee's Go Set a Watchman

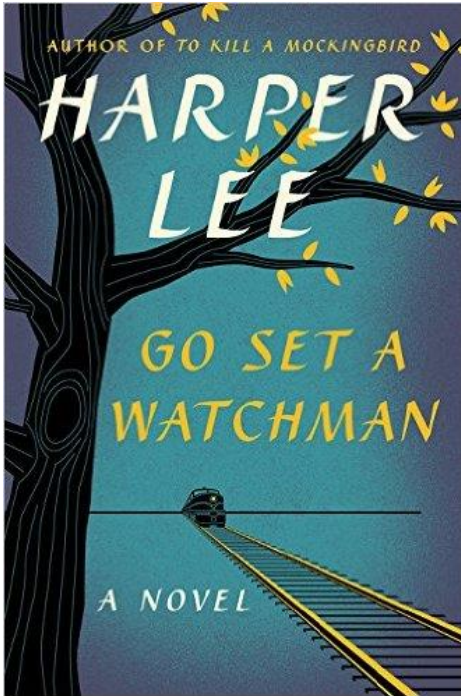


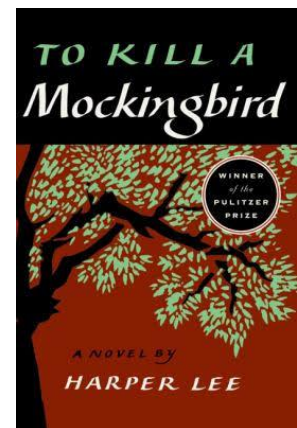
Figure 1 Image Courtesy of Amazon.com

Welcome Home. That's how I would describe the first part of the novel Go Set a Watchman by Harper Lee, author of the award winning and highly praised novel To Kill a Mockingbird.

Go Set a Watchman follows Jean Louise Finch and her return to her hometown of Maycomb, Alabama. While there, she comes in contact with her relatives, staying with her father and respected lawyer, Atticus Finch, along with her Aunt and Uncle,

Alexandra and Jack Finch. The story pretty much picks up with Jean Louise getting off the train and seeing her father again since the last time she visited. Readers are quickly introduced to the setting and a few set of characters during the first part of the book. As the novel progresses, the reader learns alongside Jean Louise an ugly truth about not only her hometown, but also her father, a man she's modeled her life after.

My first suggestion if you plan on picking up this book is that you read To Kill A Mockingbird first, and maybe even watch the [movie](#) (But only after you've read the book first!).



Lee's introduction of some new characters along with the reintroduction of a lot of the old characters was perfectly executed. Readers are more than likely to be overwhelmed with

feelings of nostalgia and welcome home in the first seven chapters. At times, Harper Lee can lose her readers with irrelevant details or conversations that don't make sense to the reader in the specific context such as when Jean Louise and Henry Clinton jump into the creek and they get in trouble over nothing.

However, most readers will be delighted to hear that despite most of the backlash this book has received from other critics about it being overly racist and controversial, in my opinion it most certainly is not. Taking into consideration the backdrop of a 1952 rural town in the Deep South, most of the mannerisms and dialect of the characters that have seen criticism would be incomplete and inappropriate if their choice in diction and thoughts didn't match up.

It might be a bit clichéd to say that my favorite character was Scout. My favorite character from the first novel was Atticus Finch. Atticus would normally take the cake because of his admiration and just behavior revolving around equality. Atticus Finch, being the lawyer he is, fights for Tom Robinson, a black male accused of rape.



However, this time the privilege is going to Jean. Atticus once said, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view. Until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." And boy was he right. That was the best part about Atticus Finch, he always taught a life lesson, even if Scout refused to listen. I think that's what makes the main conflict between Jean and Atticus work, and why I along with possibly many other readers took her side and made her our favorite character of the new novel.

I'll go right out and say it. I loved this book. I won't leave you to guess. I really loved it. What I might suggest you read next is *Inherit the Wind*, *Death of a Salesman*, and even *To Kill a Mocking Bird*. *Inherit the Wind* follows a court trial with a similar issue of a lawyer who takes the unpopular opinion and tries to win the case. If you're looking for a more family orientated father figure, *Death of a Salesman* is also a good choice. *Go Set a Watchman* is available at the [Rivers End Bookstore](#) among other popular retail locations.

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