

BOOK RECOMMENDATION

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

In view of the current movement *#blacklivesmatter* we would like to recommend the American literature classic "To Kill a Mockingbird". Although the book was already published 60 years ago, the subject is more topical than ever. It is a plea for equality.

We are in the period from 1933 to 1935 in a fictitious small town in the US state of Alabama. The American Great Depression dominates the era. The siblings Jean Louise, called "Scout", and her brother Jem grow up amidst white noble villas and tropical trees. The kids are raised by their father Atticus Finch, a philanthropic lawyer. Together they enjoy a trouble-free life between sheltered reality and childlike, imaginative thoughts.

The childhood idyll is gradually being invaded by the intolerant world of racism, which is becoming more and more prevalent in the southern states. The outstanding lawyer Atticus, upright and without prejudice, is appointed as the public defender of the black farm worker Tom. He is accused of an alleged rape of a young white woman.

The negotiations against the farm worker Tom are raised like a fair. Although the facts of the case are clear and the defence should actually result in an acquittal, the white jury submits to the unwritten law that statements made by a black man are false per se. The farm worker is found guilty.

Although chances are good that Tom could win an appeal to a higher court, he is shot shortly after the first trial by the father of the alleged rape victim, who is also largely responsible for the conviction. Atonement is not long to come, and he also has to give his life. Responsible is a mysterious and at the same time familiar stranger from the children's neighbourhood.

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