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Part One Chapter 10To Kill a MockingbirdAtticus was feeble; he was nearly fifty. When Jem and I asked him why he was so old, he said he got started late, which we felt reflected upon his abilities and manliness. He was much older than the parents of our school contemporaries, and there was nothing Jem or I could say about him when our classmates said, "My father." Jem was football crazy. Atticus was never too tired to play keep-away, but when Jem wanted to tackle him Atticus would say, "I'm too old for that, son." Our father didn't do anything. He worked in an office, not in a drugstore. Atticus did not drive a dump-truck for the county, he was not the sheriff, he did not farm, work in a garage, or do anything that could possibly arouse the admiration of anyone. Besides that, he wore glasses. He was nearly blind in his left eye, and said left eyes were the tribal curse of the Finches. Whenever he wanted to see something well, he turned his head and looked from his right eye. 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Atticus said to Jem one day, "I'd rather you shot at tin cans in the back yard, but I know you'll go after birds. Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." That was the only time I ever heard Atticus say it was a sin to do something, and I asked Miss Maudie about it. "Your father's right," she said. "Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corncribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.""Miss Maudie, this is an old neighborhood, ain't it?" "Been here longer than the town." "None, I mean the folks on our street are all old. Jem and me's the only children around here. Mrs. Dubose is close on to a hundred and Miss Rachel's old and so are you and Atticus." "I don't call fifty very old," said Miss Maudie tartly. "Not being wheeled around yet, am I? Neither's your father. But I must say Providence was kind enough to burn down, I mean the old mausoleum of mine, I'm too old to keep it up - maybe you're right, Jean Louise, this is a settled neighborhood. You've never been around young folks much, have you?" "Yessum, at school.""I mean young grown-ups. You're lucky, you know. You and Jem have the benefit of your father's age. If your father was thirty you'd find life quite different.""I sure would. Atticus can't do anything..." "You'd be surprised," said Miss Maudie. "There's life in him yet.""What can he do?" "Well, he can make somebody's will so airtight can't anybody meddle with it.""Shoot..." "Well, did you know he's the best checker-player in this town? Why, down at the Landing when we were coming up, Atticus Finch could beat everybody on both sides of the river." "Good Lord, Miss Maudie, Jem and me beat him all the time.""It's about time you found out it's because he lets you. Did you know he can play a Jew's Harp?" This modest accomplishment served to make me even more ashamed of him. "Well..." she said. "Well, what, Miss Maudie?" "Well nothing. Nothing - it seems with all that you'd be proud of him. Can't everybody play a Jew's Harp. Now keep out of the way of the carpenters. You'd better go home, I'll be in my azaleas and can't watch you. Plank might hit you. I went to the back yard and found Jem digging away at a tin can, which seems stupid with all the bluejays around. I re-lays around in the rudiments there, but said Atticus wasn't interested in guns. Atticus said to Jem one day, "I'd rather you shot at tin cans in the back yard, but I know you'll go after birds. Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." That was the only time I ever heard Atticus say it was a sin to do something, and I asked Miss Maudie about it. "Your father's right," she said. "Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. 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Quotes about atticus in chapter 10 to kill a mockingbird. Atticus quotes chapter 15. Atticus quotes chapter 1. Quotes about atticus in chapter 9 10. Atticus quotes chapter 11.