

Chapter 6 Summary

- Jem and Scout spend the day with Dill at his aunt's fish pond.
- Scout wants to keep an eye out for Mr. Avery, a neighbor who had previously astonished them by peeing in an impressive arc off his front porch, but Dill just wants to go for a walk.
- Scout, knowing that no one in Maycomb just goes for a walk, smells a rat.
- Oh, you know, they're just going to go to the streetlight by the Radley Place.
- And then they just want to peek in the window.
- Scout doesn't like this at all, but stops complaining when they accuse her of being a girl about it.
- The trio go under the wire fence at the back of the Radley Place and, after dealing with swishy collard greens, a squeaky gate, and clucking chickens, make it up to the house.
- Jem and Scout raise Dill up so he can look through the window, but all he sees is curtains.
- They're still skulking when Scout sees a shadow—a man's shadow, heading towards Jem.
- The shadow goes up to Jem, raises his arm, drops it again, and then leaves.
- The kids scam, and Scout trips as she hears a loud noise—someone's shooting at them.
- The kids make it home (Jem loses his pants along the way) and see a bunch of neighbors in front of the Radley Place.
- Miss Maudie tells them that Mr. Radley has been shooting at a "Negro" (6.60) in his yard.
- Suddenly everyone notices that Jem doesn't have any pants on.
- Dill tries to save the day by saying they were playing strip poker, but playing cards is a big no-no in Maycomb, so Jem says that they were actually playing with matches.
- Whatever, everyone says, and they head off to bed. Scout worries that every sound she hears might be Boo Radley coming to wreak his revenge. But Jem's off to get his pants. Scout tries to stop him, but Jem heads off anyway.
- Scout sits outside on the porch, listening for the dreaded shotgun blast and waiting for Jem to return.
- Finally Jem returns. With the pants.

Chapter 7 Summary

- After his adventures at the Radley Place, Jem is in a bad mood for a week.
- Scout starts second grade. It's just as bad as first grade.
- Jem finally tells Scout what happened when he went back to the Radley House: his pants were folded up on top of the fence, and the tear in them had been sloppily mended.
- CREEPY.
- Passing by the knothole tree, they see a ball of twine resting inside it.
- Scout wants to take it, but Jem thinks it might be someone's hiding spot.
- When the twine is still there after a few days, Jem takes it, and from then on there are no more qualms about taking things found in the knothole.
- A few months later, the knothole holds their best find yet: two figures carved out of soap that bear a striking resemblance to Scout and Jem.
- Scout throws them on the ground, thinking about voodoo dolls, but Jem rescues them.
- Who could have made them?
- The knothole haul keeps getting better and better: a whole pack of chewing gum, a spelling bee medal, and a broken pocket watch (which Jem tries but fails to fix).
- Scout and Jem decide to write a letter to their secret benefactor.
- But the next day, they find that the knothole has been filled with cement.
- Jem stakes out Mr. Nathan and asks why.
- Mr. Nathan says that the tree's sick and the cement is an attempt to cure it.
- Jem asks Atticus if that's true. Atticus says it looks healthy to him, but Mr. Radley should know his own trees.

Chapter 8 summary

- • Maycomb gets a season it hadn't seen in a while: winter.
- • Mr. Avery tells the kids that bad children makes the seasons change, which—what?
- • Mrs. Radley dies, and Atticus goes to pay his condolences at the Radleys. When he comes back Jem and Scout pounce on him to ask if he saw Boo in the flesh (he didn't).
- • Scout is terrified when she wakes up one morning to see white stuff pouring from the sky.
- • Yep, it's snow.
- • School is cancelled, so Jem and Scout set out to make a snowman, though they don't really know how and there isn't much snow.
- • That night, it's freezing.
- • Atticus wakes Scout in the middle of the night because Miss Maudie's house—next door to the Finches'—is on fire.
- • Once the fire is finally put out (and Miss Maudie's house reduced to a smoking hole in the ground), the Finches return to their fortunately undamaged home.
- • And then Atticus notices something. Scout is wrapped in a blanket that she didn't have when she left the house.
- • Scout says that she stayed right where he told her to, in front of the Radley Place, but she and Jem saw Mr. Nathan fighting the fire. So if he wasn't the stealthy blanket-deliverer, it must have been some other occupant of that house.
- • Hmm, who could that be?
- • Jem tells Atticus all about the knothole and the cement and his mended pants.
- • Atticus finally says outright that it must have been Boo Radley who brought the blanket, and Scout, who's been late for the clue train, is hit by belated terror.