

MISS STEPHANIE. Maybe Tim wasn't really mad. Maybe he was just full of fleas -- and Atticus Finch shot him dead.

MISS MAUDIE. If that Tim was still comin' up the street, maybe you'd be singing a different tune.

MISS STEPHANIE (agreeing). Maybe I would. (As she's going back into the house.) I'll admit I felt safer when I saw Atticus take the rifle.

JEM (still in shock). Did you see him, Scout? All of a sudden it looked like that gun was a part of him. He did it so quick -- I hafta aim for ten minutes 'fore I can hit somethin'.

MISS MAUDIE (with a wicked smile). Well, now, Miss Jean Louise. Still think your father can't do anything? Still ashamed of him?

SCOUT (meekly). No, ma'am.

MISS MAUDIE. Forgot to mention the other day that he was the deadeast shot in Maycomb County.

JEM. Dead shot--

MISS MAUDIE. Something for you to think about, Jem Finch. When he was a boy his nickname was Ol' One-Shot. Why, if he shot fifteen times and hit fourteen doves, he'd complain about wasting ammunition.

JEM. But he never said anything about it.

SCOUT. Wonder why he never goes huntin' now.

MISS MAUDIE. If your father's anything, he's civilized. Marksmanship like that's a gift of God. I think maybe he put his gun down when he realized God had given him an unfair advantage.

SCOUT. Looks like he'd be proud of it.

MISS MAUDIE (going). People like your father never bother about pride in their gifts. (She re-enters her house.)

JEAN. This bewildering event unsettled our established view of Atticus. It was something to talk over -- no, celebrate! (Wryly.) But we didn't get far.

(MRS. DUBOSE is coming out onto her porch.)

SCOUT (filled with anticipation). Will I have something to tell 'em at school on Monday!

JEM. Don't know if we should say anything about it.