Jane Smith

Sample Letters/Journal Project

Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird

Mrs. Rutan

AP Literature and Composition

4 June 2013

Dear Jem and Scout,

I know you have quite the image of me—I have often seen the way people pass my house; their eyes show trepidation, their walk is quick and weary, and they also seem to pause—ever so slightly—as they look in the window for a quick view of me. I find the people of Maycomb County to be superstitious and fool-hearty. Most of the time, I am annoyed with the passing-bys of the local folks, but you two have come to amuse me time and time again.

I remember seeing you for the first time—you were playing a game of make believe and when I saw you waving around a pair of shiny silver scissors, I knew who you were mimicking—me. I found your game to be entertaining, and have to admit I felt a twinge of jealousy. I never really enjoyed my childhood; games of fantasy and make-believe were forbidden in my Father’s house: bible at 7:00, prayer at 8:00, and worship on Sundays. Every day was the same, which is, I guess, the reason why I “snapped.” I loved my parents, but their constant rules and decorum for God became overwhelming and shut me out of the world, even more so than these walls have over the years.

I remember seeing you in the tire and rushing up to the window. I guess your curiosity intrigued me, so that’s why I left you those trinkets in the knot hole. I am still saddened to see the hard, cold cement that fills that tree. I’m sorry. My brother has never really understood me.

I am also sorry for what happened with you and Bob Ewell. If anyone should be hesitant to walk past a home, the Ewell’s property is prime. Never has a more rotten man existed in Maycomb. I have only seen a couple Negroes in my life, and the way many of Maycomb’s residents treat them reminds me of the stares I get from time to time from the street and behind my curtained window. Tom Robinson didn’t deserve his fate, and your Daddy did a fine job trying to protect him for the judgments of our very narrow minded town. I had a feeling about Ewell, and when I saw him stalking around the day you left in the funny mesh costume (were you a ham by the way?), I knew he was up to no good. Anyone can threaten a grown man, but to attack small children—it’s a coward’s deed.

I hope someday you and Jem will come to understand this world, and what is in it. I hope Jem’s arm heals in good time and you keep your spunk. The truth is, you gave me a chance to enjoy looking out into the real world again. Thanks for that.

Sincerely,

“Boo” Radley.

Reflection: (see the poetry example as well).

When I wrote this letter, I really wanted to give the character Boo Radley a stronger voice. He is a minor character in the book, but he is a character I was drawn to the most….