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## Challenges and Confrontations: Chapters 15-21 of 'To Kill a Mockingbird'

In the following chapters of Harper Lee's novel, "To Kill a Mockingbird," we delve into the heart of the story, where crucial events unfold, challenging the characters and the town of Maycomb. As the trial of Tom Robinson continues and tensions rise, we witness both the best and worst of human nature.

### Chapter 15: Tom Robinson's Trial

The trial of Tom Robinson is a central event in the novel. Atticus Finch, Tom's lawyer, stands up for justice and attempts to prove Tom's innocence. The courtroom is packed with spectators, and the trial reveals the deeply ingrained racial prejudice in Maycomb. Atticus's defense is thorough and logical, but it becomes evident that the odds are stacked against Tom.

### Chapter 16: The Mob at the Jail

Tensions escalate in Maycomb as a mob gathers at the jail to lynch Tom Robinson. Scout, Jem, and Dill follow Atticus to the jail and find themselves in a dangerous situation. Scout's innocence and kindness ultimately prevent violence from erupting, but the mob's presence demonstrates the extent of prejudice in the town.

### Chapter 17: Atticus's Defense and Mayella's Accusation

In the courtroom, Atticus presents a strong defense for Tom Robinson, highlighting the lack of evidence and pointing out inconsistencies in Mayella Ewell's testimony. However, Mayella's accusation that Tom raped her and the racial bias of the jury make it clear that Tom faces an uphill battle for justice.

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### **Chapter 18: Tom Robinson's Testimony**

Tom Robinson takes the stand and testifies that he did not harm Mayella. His account of the events contradicts Mayella's version of the story, but his honesty and vulnerability make it clear that he is a victim of injustice. Despite the evidence supporting his innocence, the jury's prejudice is hard to overcome.

### **Chapter 19: Atticus's Closing Statement**

Atticus delivers a powerful closing statement, emphasizing the lack of credible evidence and the racial bias that pervades the trial. He implores the jury to look beyond their prejudices and deliver a fair verdict. Atticus's speech is a testament to his commitment to justice and equality.

### **Chapter 20: The Verdict**

The jury's verdict in Tom Robinson's trial is devastating. Despite Atticus's efforts and the clear evidence of Tom's innocence, the jury convicts him. The injustice of the verdict is a stark reminder of the deep-seated racism in Maycomb.

### **Chapter 21: Atticus's Reaction and Bob Ewell's Threat**

Atticus's reaction to the guilty verdict is one of quiet resignation. He maintains his dignity and continues to fight for justice. However, Bob Ewell, Mayella's father, threatens Atticus for defending Tom Robinson. This threat foreshadows future events and adds to the tension in Maycomb.

