

# Characteristics of boo radley in to kill a mockingbird by harper lee

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



In the book *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee introduces us to a society called Maycomb in the 1930s in which social ignorance and prejudice were harmful. The word "Mockingbird" in the title is a symbol of innocence, and Boo Radley is one of the innocents in Maycomb. He cannot fit in the society due to his abnormal actions, and he begins living as a recluse in his house to stop communication with the world. Under the pressure and suffering of people's prejudice and ignorance after a long time of seclusion, Boo Radley is looking for hope and trying to communicate with society. Since Boo Radley is not a well-behaved child before he is isolated, people have many prejudiced rumors about him which disenable him from coming out. Boo is described as "a malevolent phantom" by the society, they say "any stealthy small crimes committed in Maycomb were his work".

The figure of Boo that shows in Maycomb's ignorant people's imaginations are monstrous and fiendish, even though the facts of his life are unknown. Their previous impressions of Boo mislead people to misunderstanding and prejudice that Boo is an evil. These unjust discriminations against the innocents are apparent in Maycomb. However, despite all the rumors of Boo, Miss Maudie, who has less prejudice says "he always spoke nicely to me, no matter what folks said he did. Spoke as nicely as he knew how". Boo is actually friendly and polite, but the people are too overwhelmed by their prejudice; they cover up all his good behaviors. Boo does not come out is not only to be responsible for what he does before and to prevent causing troubles; it is also because he is afraid to be hurt, ridiculed, and blamed by the society. He fears to face the label of villain and allegation put onto him.

The gossips from Maycomb stressed Boo Radley too much, and he can no more fit in Maycomb as a regular person.

Boo Radley is a human who desires the life of a regular person, and his loneliness motivates him in searching for friendship, which gives him hope. He watches Scout and Jem, who are two children in Maycomb, and takes chances to communicate with them. He finds a knothole in the tree, and place little gifts like " a whole package of chewing gum," " a tarnished medal," and " a pocket patch that wouldn't run,". Boo Radley craves care and love, so he views the knothole as the hope of his life that can help him to conquer his fear and struggles. His actions are telling the children that if they go deeper to discover him as they did for finding the knothole; they will know he can be a friend. Boo is not the way people portray him that he has no humanity, and actually, he is pure and innocent like a child. Unfortunately, Nathan Radley, who is Boo's brother fills the knothole. He places " cement in that hole in that tree," and he says " tree's dying", even though it is apparent that the tree is healthy. His ignorance toward Boo and his biased beliefs make him thinks it is a sin for Boo who is unaccepted to appear in public and have contact with the outside world. His actions that seem to be inessential hurts Boo's hopeful heart a lot. It is difficult for an outsider who is isolated to have a normal life, but there is always hope, and Boo Radley will continuously discover it.

Along with the hope, Boo Radley keeps trying hard to help the children, but he loses his social skills when he is in front of people due to his isolation from the world. Toward the end of the book, while Scout and Jem are chasing by a

man, Boo comes out, and his braveness saves the children. He is “ breathing heavily and staggering...moving around, as if searching for something”. Boo has no enough experience of the outside world, but the situation of the two children are dangerous. Boo’s hope is still existing, which gives him so much courage to come out and face such a risky situation. The children are his hope; he thinks it is his responsibility to give care and love to the children no matter how he has suffered from the society. Nevertheless, Boo is only able to do this secretly, when he sees their face, he does not know what to do because of his lack of ability to social contact. “ Every move he made was uncertain, as if he were not sure his hands and feet could make proper contact with the thing he touched”. Boo is closed in the house without making direct contact with any people other than his family. He is afraid of people, and he is unacquainted to see and touch people so closely. Scout leads the conversation and asks Boo Radley, “ won’t you have a seat”. Scout’s care gives Boo hope that it is unnecessary to be scared, and there are people treat him nicely. Boo’s suffering from prejudice and ignorance had so much impact on him that he cannot quickly get through. The struggles of prejudice and ignorance harm Boo Radley seriously, but the inconspicuous care and contact with the children give him hope that supports him all the time.

Through the novel, the good nature and kindness of Boo Radley depicting his true self gradually revealed as he undergoes negative prejudgments.

Prejudice of a person generally results in a misrepresentation of an

individual, and many potential heroes could be missing from our lives forever.