I Always Hated These Days

By: Jamie Coulson

I always hated these days, father would leave to go ‘hunting’ for food but we knew what he was really doing. He would sneak off to the bar with his mates, trying to escape the never-ending sound of childish screams and tantrums that flooded the house. I had never left the house or at least I can’t remember a time when I did. My mother passed away when I was little leaving me to constantly provide and care for my little brothers and sisters. My father, Robert Ewell, was a horrible man. He was a racist, a sexist, offensive, dirty, and abusive. Many times, he would come home late at night extremely drunk and sometimes I would have to protect my siblings from his wrath. But tonight, he wasn’t here, he had just left which normally meant he wouldn’t be back till early the next day. I had just wrangled my siblings to bed and dealt with their small quarrels and complaints, and now I was alone to do as I pleased.

During these times, I enjoyed sitting on the porch and looked out to the stars and the landscape. It was an amazing view, most likely the only good thing about this horrendous place. At this time the sun started to descended below the horizon and the sky was lit up by the most extraordinary array/sea??? of warm glows. I sat there for an hour just looking at the amazing sunset until he came past, Tom Robinson. I watched this man walk past the house on his way back home from the cotton fields every day for the past couple of weeks. Over this period, I had grown to be oddly attracted to him, the only problem with this was that he was black. This sort attraction would be looked down upon by the wider community. My father was very vocal about what he thought of the black community. He had always told me that the blacks were violent, volatile, vicious, disgusting, molesting, murderers. But from looking at Tom every day for the past month I had not seen a single characteristic about him that would warrant me sharing any of these opinions with my father. He looked like a young, caring, and loving man. One thing that I could never understand about my father’s opinions was that he always told me that the blacks weren’t allowed freedom, but there he was, a black man walking around at his own will and here I was, a white woman, that had never left the house and was unable to leave… he had more freedom than me.

Over the past month I had begun to fantasise about how Tom would one day come into my home and take me away from this terrible place. I had dreamed that one day he would come past on his way back how from the cotton fields he would come into my house tell me how we are going to run away together then we would leave and run away together and I would never have to see this dreadful house ever again. As I emerged from my blissful haze I realized that I had been staring at him for this time. He was looking at me with confusion “oh no” I thought to myself “He might think that I’m weird”. So, I raised my hand and waved at him with a small but polite grin “Hello Tom” I said. Tom looked at me with surprise “Hello Madame” he said back to me, he turned to look forward and continued pacing his way down the street. I sat there gazing at him as he slowly paced towards the horizon, I watched him gracefully disappear over the horizon.

I sat the for a while just staring at where I had last saw Tom, wishing he would come back over the horizon. He was the real reason that I enjoyed sitting her, seeing him was the best part of my day, he allowed me to escape from my horrible situation. “One day” I said to myself “One day I will leave this place behind me”, That was one of the only promises I ever made to myself. Someday I will leave this house and never come back and when that day came it would be the best day I will experience in my life. It was completely dark now as I sat on the porch I could hear the subtle hooting of an owl in the distance. Then a loud snap of a branch pierced through the silence “Hey Kiddo” I heard to my left. I quickly snapped my head right to see what had made the sound and to my despair I saw the man that haunted my nightmares, my father.