

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor

Setting

- Western Mississippi, near Vicksburg, in 1933. During prejudice of whites against blacks in the South during the Great Depression

Important Characters

- Cassie Logan - narrator, 9-year-old protagonist, second-oldest with fiery temper. Very naive about racism.
- Little Man - (Clayton Chester Logan) - neat first-grader, youngest, 6 years old.
- Stacey Logan - 12-year-old boy, oldest, part-adult, part-child.
- Christopher-John - cheerful 7-year-old, second youngest, timid.
- Papa (David Logan) - Cassie's father, values independence, works on the railroad
- Mama (Mary Logan) - Cassie's mother, a schoolteacher.
- Uncle Hammer - Papa's brother, lives in Chicago, short temper.
- Big Ma (Caroline Logan) - Papa's mother, 60-years-old, runs the Logan farm.
- TJ Avery - trouble-making friend of Stacey, family sharecrops younger brother named Claude.
- Jeremy Simms - often beaten for associating with the Logan children.
- Lillian Jean Simms - A prissy seventh grader.
- Melvin and BW Simms - brothers, make trouble, pretend to befriend TJ
- L.T. Morrison - big, burly man, comes to work on the Logan farm.
- Mr. Jamison - local lawyer, very sympathetic.
- The Wallace Family (Kaleb, Dewberry, etc.) - family runs a general store; violent, brutal people.
- Harlan Granger - rich plantation owner, wants to buy back the Logan's land.

Point of View

- First person from Cassie's perspective.
- Uses gossip and story telling to provide Cassie with information.
- Follows her brother around, makes excuses, and refuses to be left behind.

Racism / Discrimination

- It is not racism itself, but rather Cassie's realization of it that is important.

The Great Depression

- The parents talk about "hard times," the school books have been used for eleven years
- Save the shoes for Sunday wear, patches on their clothes.
- Transportation ranges from horse and buggy to beat up pick-up trucks and work is nearly impossible to find.

Themes

- Friendship / Family
- Identity and Surviving