Sins in the World

Elbert Hubbard said once, “Die, (v.): To stop sinning suddenly.” When an innocent dies, there are no sins. Harper Lee’s historical fiction novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, is set in the Great Depression where two children come to realize life through one of the trial cases of their father. In Lee’s novel, Jem and Scout, Tom Robinson, and a pill bug were all going to be ruined by the community. Destroying an innocent living being in the world is a sin.

Jem and Scout symbolize two innocent mockingbirds. When Mr. Tate, Maycomb’s sheriff, was called to investigate, he found Mr. Ewell, “lyin’ on the ground under that tree down yonder with a kitchen knife stuck up under his ribs” (266). For the fact that Mr. Ewell tried to kill Jem and Scout, he lies dead under the tree. After Jem and Scout were attacked, Atticus, their father, said, “I can’t conceive of anyone low-down enough to do a thing like this, but I hope you found him” (266). For Mr. Finch to say it was low-down to attack Jem and Scout, it means that the two had no way of defending themselves and had done nothing to bother no one. Mr. Ewell had taken the latter for trying to kill the two innocents.

Before the attack on Jem and Scout, it is a sin that Tom Robinson died. Atticus knew that   
Tom is an innocent man but the juries, “could and did,” convict him (220). There is no evidence that Tom Robinson had committed the crime he was accused of. The community knew about Tom’s death and it was problematic enough to be reported, “Mr. Underwood simply figured it was a sin to kill cripples, be they standing, sitting, or escaping. He likened Tom’s death to the senseless slaughter of songbirds by hunters and children…” (241). Tom’s tragic end is the same as a mockingbird killed at a shotgun. People’s impenitent killing of innocents is a sin.

Along with Tom Robinson’s dismissal, Scout had almost killed a pill bug but was stopped by Jem. “I said set him out on the back steps,” was what Jem had told Scout to do (238). Jem understood that the pill bug didn’t bother her and she shouldn’t kill him off. After Scout reluctantly sets the bug down, she thought “He was certainly never cruel to animals, but I had never known his charity to embrace the insect world” (238). Scout didn’t understand the pill bug’s innocent ways and they never did acts of harm. The innocent creates in the world should be preserved and not harmed.

Anyone who tries to dispose of someone who did nothing to bother people carries a sin. Jem and Scout, Tom Robinson, and the pill bug show the good and innocence in people’s lives. The world would be righteous if people considered the idea to not kill animals, including humans, who have done nothing wrong. People will come to realize the guilt associated with eliminating an innocent life. When everyone does this, there will be no more senseless sacrifice of the innocent.