



By: Mildred D. Taylor

ROLL OF THUNDER, HEAR MY CRY

CHAPTERS 5 & 6 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What does Cassie say that leads you to believe her trip to Strawberry might be a disappointment after all?

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1. Answer

She says “Is this it?” when she sees the town for the first time.

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2. Why does Big Ma have to park her wagon near the back of the market area?

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2. Answer

The black people are allowed to sell their goods there.

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3. When T.J. shows the handgun to Stacey, he says, “I’d sell my life for that gun. One of these days I’m gonna have it, too.” What do you think this statement foreshadows?

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3. Answer

T.J. may try to steal the gun.

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4. Why does Big Ma make Cassie apologize to Lillian Jean Simms for something that was not her fault?

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4. Answer

Big Ma is frightened because she recognizes the consequences of offending white people. She knows that it will cause less trouble if Cassie apologizes.

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5. Compare Uncle Hammer's and Big Ma's reactions to Cassie when she tells what she said to Mr. Barnett at the Mercantile that day.

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5. Answer

Big Ma is shocked that Cassie has spoken so boldly to Mr. Barnett; Uncle Hammer is pleased and laughs, thinking that his niece has shown some backbone.

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6. Mama explains to Cassie, “Big Ma...did what she had to do and...she didn’t like doing it one bit more than you did.” What does she mean?

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6. Answer

She means that black people sometimes had to swallow their pride to survive because the system did not treat them equally. If the Simms had decided to do something to Cassie, they probably would not have been punished by the law.