

MOTHER

They're calling him inferior, then putting the blame on him for feelin' inferior. It's just like I was tellin' you. Don't sound like he won a thing to me.

JOHN

But one Justice disagreed with the rest. That was Justice John Marshall Harlan. He warned that these kinds of decisions would put the black race not only in unfair treatment but also put what he called "a blessing on the idea of black inferiority."

MOTHER

So you're thinkin' this Judge Harlan is a reasonable man?

JOHN

I just told you what he said. That sounds reasonable to me.

MOTHER

Maybe. Maybe not.

JOHN

What do you mean?

MOTHER

We'll see. I'm all for you wanting to stay in school, son. But you've got to have some common sense too.

JOHN

Will you stand by my decision to try?

MOTHER

Of course, I will. Just don't want you to get your hopes up sky high. You're in high school. That's already a good bit of learning. Maybe the time is right for you to just go on with your life and let it be...

JOHN

We had our own school. There was a high school for white boys, a high school for white girls, and a high school for Negroes. And now they're closing ours down. It's not right.

MOTHER

There's not a school to go to any longer. So you can't go. You know why they're closing it. They got so many Negro children in the lower grades that the buildings can't hold them all.

JOHN

Does that make it right that they're going to solve the problem by turning my school into a grade school? So now I don't have a high school to attend?