***Holes***

***Chapter 17***

***Summary And Analysis:***

***Summary:***

The boys continue to dig in the spot that the Warden believes contained the gold tube. After a week and a half she grows impatient and when Armpit returns from the bathroom one day she jabs at him with a pitchfork, knocking him into a hole and leaving spots of blood on his shirt. The Warden then tells Mr. Pendanski that he is giving the boys too much water. As they continue to dig Zigzag knocks Stanley in the head with a shovel, cutting a gash near his ear. Mr. Sir makes him a bandage out of a sack of sunflower seeds and tells him to get back to work. Zigzag is not apologetic, in fact, he even makes Stanley dig out the dirt that had been on Stanley's shovel when he was hit.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

Group D digs in the area around where [X-Ray](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/x-ray-rex) supposedly found the tube for a week. Eventually, the holes all connect. The [Warden](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/the-warden) becomes less and less patient and snaps one afternoon when [Armpit](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters) returns from a bathroom break. With her pitchfork, the Warden jabs at Armpit, pushing him backwards into the hole and leaving three bloody spots on his chest. The Warden also tells [Mr. Pendanski](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/mr-pendanski) that he's giving the boys too much water.

***Analysis Part 1:***

The Warden's behavior here is horrifying, but it does drive home that for her, the inmates are absolutely a means to find whatever she's looking for--essentially, she doesn't care about the boys themselves. Again, this suggests that Camp Green Lake itself exists outside the realm of the formal justice system that technically forbids these abuses.

***Summary Part 2:***

That afternoon, [Zigzag](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/zigzag-ricky)'s shovel hits [Stanley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/stanley-yelnats) in the head. [Magnet](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters) calls for [Mr. Sir](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/mr-sir), who bandages Stanley's bloody head and sends him back to the hole. When Stanley returns, Zigzag points to the bit of dirt that fell off of Stanley's shovel when he fell. He insists that it's Stanley's dirt and is covering up his own dirt. After Stanley moves it, Zigzag begins digging again.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Zigzag’s petty behavior illustrates poignantly how the cruelty of Camp Green Lake creates a system in which the boys feel they can't actually look out for each other: doing so would mean doing more backbreaking work than is absolutely necessary.