***Holes***

***Chapter 49***

***Summary and Analysis:***

***Summary:***

The narrator relates how yellow-spotted lizards never appeared in Green Lake until after the lake dried up. One hundred and ten years ago people used to hunt rattlesnakes in the desert and they knew there were lizards there. Sam gives rattlesnake hunters onion juice to drink because lizards won't bite people with onion blood. Back in the present day, Ms. Morengo shows Stanley and Zero the cure for foot odor that Stanley's father has invented. It smells like peaches. Ms. Morengo tells Stanley that the sneakers were stolen at 3:15 pm and that Derrick Dunne said that at 3:20 Stanley was still fishing his notebook from the toilet in the boy's bathroom. This proved that Stanley didn't steal the sneakers. Zero says that he stole the sneakers and Ms. Morengo pretends not to hear him and tells him not to say it again. For the first time in over 100 years, rain falls on Camp Green Lake.

***Summary (48-49):***

The woman who comes to the camp is Mrs. Morengo, Stanley's lawyer, and she is accompanied by a tall man who is the Attorney General of Texas. The Warden says that Stanley put her stuff into his case and that she has to check it before he leaves in case he's put drugs or weapons in it, but the lawyer declares that since Stanley has been released, he is not under the control of the Warden anymore and she rushes him away. However, Stanley won't go without Zero who is putting on a brave face and giving the "thumbs-up" sign. All the boys, except X-Ray, come out to greet Zero and Stanley, and even Zigzag apologizes to Stanley. Stanley refuses to budge without Zero, and when Ms. Morengo sees that Stanley really won't go home unless Zero can come too, she demands to see Zero's records. The Warden, having had them destroyed, can't produce any paperwork. When the Attorney General goes to find his records in the computerized files, he too, comes up empty. With no records of any kind, there is no authority to hold him in Camp and Zero leaves camp with Stanley and Ms. Morengo. The Warden is disgraced because she is not running the camp as it should be run.

Chapter 49 starts out with a brief look back to the original Camp Green Lake. The story is that rattlesnake hunters sought out Sam's onion juice because yellow-spotted lizards don't like it.

Stanley and Zero drive home with Ms. Morengo, a patent attorney for Stanley's dad's new product. The attorney had investigated Stanley's situation and was able to find witnesses who could claim that Stanley was in the boy's bathroom at 3:20. The witness was Derrick Dunne and some other girls also saw Stanley as he was coming out of the restroom carrying a wet notebook. The shoes were stolen at 3:15, so it couldn't have been Stanley. Stanley's father has found a product that eliminates food odor that smells a little like peaches. On the way home, for the first time in more than a hundred years, it begins to rain over the dry lakebed.

***Analysis(48-49):***

The historical story of Camp Green Lake continues to affect the modern-day Camp Green Lake. When Kissing Kate Barlow buried treasure in the first Stanley Yelnat's case, no one could have imagined that his great-grandson, Stanley Yelnats IV, would find it. Warden Walker is the descendent of Linda Miller Walker, the wife of "Trout." The onion juice that Sam developed must have really worked because those hungry, dangerous, yellow-toothed lizards had no interest in Stanley and Zero, who had eaten nothing but onions for weeks.

Stanley and Zero have a strong friendship. Stanley refuses to leave without Zero and Zero encourages Stanley when he's being released by giving the thumb's-up sign. The loyalty between them produces rewards. When Stanley won't leave without Zero, the Warden and her staff are caught for destroying records - an act which frees Zero from their power.

The theme of "justice" has been an important one throughout the book. Here, the good guys win. Stanley and Zero's fortunes are turned for the better all because Stanley Yelnats carried Hector Zeroni up the mountain and erased Elya Yelnats' forgotten promise to carry Madame Zeroni up the mountain, let her drink from the stream, and sing her the lullaby.

***Detailed Summary(43-49):***

Stanley and [Zero](https://www.gradesaver.com/holes/study-guide/character-list#zero) spend one last day on God's Thumb, picking onions and planning their return to Camp Green Lake. On the way down the mountain, Stanley stumbles and falls, almost costing them their onions and water. They walk and walk until they reach the *Mary Lou*, with Zero telling Stanley anecdotes from his pre-Camp Green Lake life, during which he was homeless and slept in a park near Stanley's house, although the two boys never met.

As the sun sets, the boys approach the camp, and Stanley points out the hole where the treasure will probably be found. Once everyone in the camp is asleep, Stanley and Zero refill their water jars and start digging, eventually coming across a large, hard object which appears to be a "treasure chest" (201).

Suddenly, the boys hear the Warden's voice, and when they look up, they see [Mr. Pendanski](https://www.gradesaver.com/holes/study-guide/character-list#mr-pendanski), the Warden, and [Mr. Sir](https://www.gradesaver.com/holes/study-guide/character-list#mr-sir) standing around the hole. Almost immediately, the six characters notice that the hole is teeming with yellow-spotted lizards. The boys are terrified, knowing that if they are bitten, they will die; the counselors are pleased that they'll have bodies to give to any inquiring authorities. Stanley learns that he was proved innocent while he was gone, and his lawyer came to Camp Green Lake to pick him up, but had to leave empty-handed. The stand-off between counselors, boys, and lizards continues until the camp's wake-up time, with both boys still miraculously alive. The camp's normal digging activities are suspended for the day, and Stanley and Zero stay in the hole waiting to die.

Cars pull up, containing, among others, the Attorney General and Stanley's lawyer (although he doesn't know how his parents managed to afford her). The lawyer is furious with the Warden, and threatens to file charges against her if the boys don't make it out of the hole alive. Stanley finally summons the courage to pull himself - and then Zero - out of the hole. [The Warden](https://www.gradesaver.com/holes/study-guide/character-list#the-warden) tries to seize the suitcase with the treasure inside, but Zero points out that it has Stanley's name on it. The Warden cannot believe it, but it's true: STANLEY YELNATS is written on the suitcase, which was originally stolen from Stanley's great-grandfather.

Back at the camp, the Warden tries to bully the boys into opening the suitcase and showing her what's inside, but Stanley and his lawyer refuse to grant her wish. The Attorney General tells Stanley that he is free to go, but Stanley says he "can't leave Hector" behind (219). The Warden is unable to produce Zero's records - which she destroyed after he ran away - and Stanley's lawyer decides to take him back to the city along with Stanley. The other boys from D tent appear, wishing their friends well and warning them to be careful "out in the real world" (221).

There is one final flashback to the town of Green Lake at the beginning of Chapter 49. [Sam](https://www.gradesaver.com/holes/study-guide/character-list#sam) the onion man is approached by three men who want to buy some of his "lizard juice," a mixture made of onions that protects against yellow-spotted lizards (223). Sam tells the men that the "lizards don't like onion blood," which explains why Stanley and Zero were unharmed by the yellow-spotted lizards when digging for the treasure (224).

In the car on the way back to Stanley's home, Stanley's lawyer tells Stanley that his father is in the process of patenting a cure for foot odor - he has *finally*been able to create an invention that will make the family comfortably wealthy. The boys note that the product smells "familiar," like peaches (225). As the boys drift off into sleep, it starts to rain for the first time in a hundred and ten years.

***Detailed Analysis (43-49):***

Stanley has a flashback on the point of death to "when he was very little" and fell down an icy hill with his mother (209). This memory is surprisingly ambivalent, as are the details he remembers: there is the "sharp coldness of the snow," the "light-headed feeling" of rolling down the hill, and the image of his mother's "bright and cheery face" (209). Stanley tells us that "he almost cried, but instead he laughed" and then he and his mother rolled down the hill again, on purpose, and got hot chocolate together (209). It is a strange memory for his mind to go back to, but it seems to suggest that he wants to be in control of his death (e.g., by rolling down the hill on purpose the second time around) and that it isn't anything to be frightened of although it seems scary at first. In this sense, Stanley demonstrates a lot of maturity in this scene, not least because he refuses to panic when he sees himself faced with almost certain death.

Zero comes into his own during the second half of the book, starting with his bold escape from Camp Green Lake. He relies on Stanley's help to get up the mountain despite being weakened by thirst, and he owes his life to his friend. In the scene of the stand-off between boys, lizards, and counselors, Zero gets the chance to show the adults that they all underestimated him. Zero was taunted and mocked by both Mr. Pendanski and the Warden for not being able to read and thus being worthless. Now, Zero's reading wrenches the Warden's treasure from her grasp at the last minute and gives it to its rightful owner: Stanley. Characteristically, when the Warden tells Zero one last time that he "can't even read," Zero simply says nothing (217). He doesn't need to prove himself to her.

We also see the solidarity between the boys firmly cemented. Zero and Stanley had a rough start. Stanley initially judged Zero more or less like the other boys did, but after their reading lessons they became closer, and when they became outlaws together the bond between them strengthened further. Stanley saved Zero's life, and they worked together to survive the trek back to camp. This closeness culminates with Stanley refusing to leave Zero behind at Camp Green Lake, insisting that he must be freed as well. The bond between the boys is physically manifested in their repeated hand-signal: a thumbs-up. This symbolizes the time they spent together on God's Thumb, and all the hardships that they overcame as a pair.

The flashback in Chapter 49 answers a mystery in the preceding chapters: how do Stanley and Zero survive in the lizard-infested hole, when by all rights they should have been bitten and killed? It is interesting that only the reader is privileged with this information; in the boys' minds it is never explained and remains a miracle. The past, although it influences and can help explain the present, also is confined, and only an omniscient narrator can see all the linking threads between past and present.

The pathetic fallacy reappears at the very end of Part Two, just as it opened the section. As the boys leave Camp Green Lake, the desert experiences the first drop of rain "in over a hundred years" (225). This symbolizes a new era for Green Lake, and a break with the horrors of the past. Sam's death caused the rain to stop, and the boys' survival and freedom has broken the curse, in some sense, and caused the rain to fall again.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

The narrator states that there weren't yellow-spotted lizards in Green Lake until after the lake dried up, but everyone knew about the "red-eyed monsters" in the hills. One afternoon, several men approached [Sam](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/sam). They said they were going rattlesnake hunting and wanted some of his "lizard juice." Sam gave each man two bottles of onion juice and instructed them as to when to drink it. He said that lizards don't like onion blood.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Finally the narrator solves the mystery: onions provided Stanley and Zero protection against the yellow-spotted lizards. This is another way that the natural world helped the boys, either inadvertently or on purpose, to best the Warden and complete their task.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Stanley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/stanley-yelnats) and [Zero](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/zero-hector-zeroni) sit in [Ms. Morengo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/ms-morengo)'s backseat, the suitcase between them. Stanley admits he has no idea what's in it. Ms. Morengo explains that she's a patent attorney helping [Stanley's father](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/stanley-s-father) with his new invention, and she looked into the events that took place on the day the shoes were stolen. When she mentions interviewing [Derrick Dunne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters), Stanley is surprised to still feel ashamed about the bullying he suffered. Zero admits that he stole the shoes, but Ms. Morengo says she didn't hear that.

***Analysis Part 2:***

When Derrick's bullying turns out to be one of the things that frees Stanley, it suggests that even though his cruelty was nonsensical and awful, it too happened for a reason—it becomes Stanley's alibi. Ms. Morengo's insistence that Zero not confess to the crime reinforces the idea that the formal justice system's provisions aren't enough to truly get justice; it takes human discretion to do that.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Ms. Morengo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/ms-morengo) explains that [Stanley's father](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/stanley-s-father) invented a product to cure foot odor and passes the boys samples. [Zero](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/holes/characters/zero-hector-zeroni) thinks it smells familiar, and Ms. Morengo says people think it's peaches. The boys fall asleep and it begins to rain at Green Lake.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Remember that Trout Walker had an incurable and smelly foot fungus; Stanley's father's invention then appears to be linked to the way in which Stanley atoned for Sam's death, as evidenced by the rain at Green Lake.