***Maniac Magee***

***Chapter 25***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Brief Summary:***

Chapter 25. The next morning, Grayson reveals at one time he played minor league baseball. Maniac is surprised by this news and begs Grayson to share his stories about playing baseball. Grayson reluctantly agrees and talks about his life as a pitcher with the Bluefield Bullets in Bluefield, West Virginia. After telling his story, Grayson agrees to let Maniac tag along with him at work under the pretense he is Grayson’s nephew. As they work, Grayson continues telling Maniac about getting a chance to strike out famous baseball player Willie Mays and also about missing a chance at the Majors because of an “off” night. Grayson says he played in a Mexican league until he could no longer play baseball at the age of 40. With a loss of direction, Grayson turned to working at the zoo and parks department and has worked there ever since.

***Analysis (20-25):***

Although Maniac is successful at untying the knot and is momentarily treated as a hero, the strength of racism proves to be too much to overcome. The breaking point comes when Maniac sees Amanda’s beloved book torn to shreds to be used for confetti. Maniac can deal with the neighborhood disliking him for being white but he can’t allow them to hurt the Beales. He takes his minor victory at Cobble’s Corner and momentarily abandons his wish for peaceful racial coexistence.

As Maniac leaves town, he walks in the middle of the road that separates the East and West End neighborhoods with both of the antagonists, Mars and McNab, following him the entire way. The symbolism lies in the fact that Maniac doesn’t belong on either side. He’s lost and missing the sense of belonging he yearns for.

Maniac returns to the zoo and meets another of the novel’s main characters, Grayson. Grayson discovers Maniac when he is cold, weak, and almost at his breaking point. The relationship between the two is reciprocal in different ways. Grayson serves as a protector and father figure to Maniac. Maniac brings joy to Grayson’s life and passively helps him to understand the ignorance of his prejudice. After learning Grayson played minor league baseball, Maniac connects with Grayson’s love of the game and uses it as a means to learn more about this guarded man. Once again, Maniac uses his love and talent for sports as a way to connect with others.

When asked by Grayson why he doesn’t go to school, Maniac replies it’s because he doesn’t have an address. An address is incredibly important to Maniac and serves as more than a physical house. To Maniac, an address symbolizes a sense of belonging and a place where one is surrounded by people who love him. Throughout the novel, there is a sense that Maniac has a personal purpose to obtain an identifying address. The death of his parents and subsequent homelessness has instilled in him a great desire to find an address to permanently call home.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

The next morning, as [Maniac](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/jeffrey-lionel-maniac-magee) and [Grayson](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/earl-grayson) eat breakfast together, Grayson admits to Maniac that he once played baseball in the minors. Maniac is amazed, but Grayson’s voice has “a frayed weariness.”

***Analysis Part 1:***

Grayson feels that his minor league career is unimpressive, but from Maniac’s perspective, it’s remarkable, and a point of connection between the two of them.

***Summary Part 2:***

But when [Maniac](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/jeffrey-lionel-maniac-magee) asks what position [Grayson](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/earl-grayson) played, Grayson says, “Pitcher.” This time, his voice sounds “fresh and robust.” His tone startles Maniac. The tone suggests, “I am not what you see.”

***Analysis Part 2:***

Grayson’s tone suggests that, deep down, the old man still has a great deal of pride. Maniac is able to recognize his inherent dignity.

***Summary Part 3:***

At lunchtime, [Maniac](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/jeffrey-lionel-maniac-magee) won’t let [Grayson](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/earl-grayson) return to work until he tells one story about the Minor Leagues. So he tells Maniac about playing ball in Bluefield, West Virginia. A gas station attendant had played a trick on Grayson when he first arrived—claiming that the local diner gives free meals to rookies. The story ends with Grayson missing his first baseball game because he’s washing dishes at the Blue Star restaurant to work off the huge meal he’d just consumed. After that story, Maniac doesn’t leave Grayson’s side. He starts helping Grayson with his zoo maintenance work every afternoon. They eat meals together and even spend weekends together.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Though Grayson denies that he has any stories worth telling, Maniac has a subtle way of coaxing tales out of his new friend—forging a basis for an ongoing friendship and also reaffirming Grayson’s dignity in the process. Like Maniac, Grayson has lacked personal connection over the years and has suffered from that.

***Summary Part 4:***

All the while, [Grayson](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/earl-grayson) keeps claiming, “I ain’t got no stories,” but [Maniac](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/jeffrey-lionel-maniac-magee) repeatedly coaxes baseball stories out of him—stories of Grayson’s time in minor league teams all over the country, and the happy story about striking out Willie Mays in Mays’s final at-bat before moving up to the Majors.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Maniac continues to display his knack for recognizing what makes people who they are and helping them tap into that potential.

***Summary Part 5:***

[Grayson](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/earl-grayson)’s saddest story is about the scout who visited from the Toledo Mud Hens. The Mud Hens were one step below the Majors, so this was Grayson’s big chance. But in the next game, Grayson pitched the worst game of his life and was benched by the third inning. He was 27, but he hung on in the minors until he was 40, at which point he figured he was only fit for menial jobs.

***Analysis Part 5:***

For Grayson, the loss of a possible career in the majors was really a kind of loss of family, and hence a loss of a sense of self. In this sense, he’s a homeless orphan much like Maniac.