***Maniac Magee***

***Chapter 42***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Brief Summary:***

Chapter 42. The air is thick as Mars steps foot into the home of the hateful McNabs. George McNab gets up from his chair and leaves the party while the boys stay downstairs and begin to play games. The boys play Rebels, whites versus blacks. As Mars watches cautiously, a Cobra jumps out from a hole in the ceiling and startles him. The other Cobras laugh and a fight nearly ensues. Maniac summons all of his strength to get Mars out of the house.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Maniac](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/jeffrey-lionel-maniac-magee) shows [Piper](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/piper-and-russell-mcnab) his birthday gift, a compass, and promises to give it to him when the school year ends. [George McNab](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/george-mcnab) leaves the room, saying, “Let me know when it leaves,” referring to [Mars Bar](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/mars-bar-thompson). The kids are distracted by loud, silly games, but these soon devolve into “Rebels,” a game of “blacks vs. whites.” Most of the kids crowd into the “pillbox,” wanting to be “whites.” When one kid, a member of the Cobras, leaps from the hole in the ceiling and startles Mars Bar, Maniac has to restrain Mars Bar and [Giant John](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/giant-john-mcnab) from getting into a fight. John stops when Maniac reminds him that he owes Maniac for bringing his little brothers home.

***Analysis Part 1:***

The McNabs’ racism is vicious, worse than anything Maniac has directly encountered before. While the little boys’ “Rebels” game might retain an element of innocence (as will be shown later), George McNab’s very real hatred of black people shows where such “games” lead.

***Summary Part 2:***

Out in the street, [Maniac](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/jeffrey-lionel-maniac-magee) follows [Mars Bar](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/mars-bar-thompson), who finally yells at Maniac for “suckering” him and heads back to the East End. Maniac feels he deserves that—he shouldn’t have expected a miracle. Yet he feels proud of Mars Bar for showing pride—ready to take on the Cobras even while badly outnumbered. Mars Bar isn’t “bad,” he thinks; he’s good.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Maniac quickly recognizes that his efforts to combat the McNabs’ racism were naïve. He’s come a long way from his attitudes upon first arriving in the East End. Yet the incident also increases his respect for Mars Bar—unlike Giant John McNab, Mars Bar is no mere bully.