***Maniac Magee***

***Chapter 13***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Brief Summary:***

Chapter 13. As Maniac gets settled into his new home, the Beale household becomes a much calmer and happier place. Maniac helps with the younger siblings by playing with them, reading to them, untying the knots in their shoes, and taking baths with them. In turn, Mr. and Mrs. Beale’s job becomes easier and they aren’t always cleaning and battling with the younger children. In addition, Maniac pleases his new family by helping around the house. At the end of the chapter, it is discovered Maniac has an allergy to pizza, a food he had never tried until now.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Maniac](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/jeffrey-lionel-maniac-magee) fits into the Beales’ home right away. He plays with [Hester and Lester](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters) and reads to them. He walks Bow Wow and even helps with the dishes and other chores without being asked. [Mrs. Beale](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/mrs-beale) is astonished by the neatness of Maniac’s bedroom. In fact, it looks like he doesn’t sleep in the bed. One night, she discovers that he sleeps on the floor. He can’t stand feeling too comfortable.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Maniac doesn’t have a typical kid’s aversion to chores or tendency to make messes. It’s as if he doesn’t want to take his new home for granted. He’s also spent so much time homeless that some of the comforts of home feel alien to him.

***Summary Part 2:***

With [Maniac](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/jeffrey-lionel-maniac-magee) there, other interesting things begin to occur around the Beale house. For example, [Hester and Lester](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters) stop coloring on everything—they have Maniac to distract them. [Amanda](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/amanda-beale) no longer feels the need to lug her books around in a suitcase. Everyone’s fingertips heal, because Maniac takes over the job of untying the little ones’ shoelace [knots](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/symbols/knots).

***Analysis Part 2:***

Maniac’s presence—just his participation in the normal rhythms of family life, nothing spectacular or heroic—has a positive impact on those around him. He also shows a liking for tackling thorny problems, which will be significant later.

***Summary Part 3:***

One day, [Mrs. Beale](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/mrs-beale) finds [Maniac](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/maniac-magee/characters/jeffrey-lionel-maniac-magee) covered with raised red blotches. She takes him to the doctor, and he’s diagnosed with a pizza allergy. At first, they think that’s impossible, since such a thing would have been discovered before now. But when the doctor asks Maniac, “You have eaten pizza before, haven’t you?” Maniac’s expression tells them the truth.

***Analysis Part 3:***

The “pizza allergy”—which of course doesn’t really exist—adds to the legend surrounding Manic and, more to the point, it shows that he’s been deprived of many of those things that are considered normal in kids’ lives.