***Tuck Everlasting***

***Chapter 20***

***Summary and Analysis:***

***Brief Summary***

The man in yellow lies limply on the ground. Mae explains to the constable that he threatened Winnie, but the constable says that she was the one who kidnapped the girl. Winnie tells him that the Tucks didn't kidnap her, but she instead came because she wanted to. Tuck is looking at the form of the man in the yellow suit with envy in his eyes, and Winnie takes his hand to distract him. The constable says he needs to take Winnie back to her family, and he needs to take Mae as well because she attacked the man in the yellow suit. They need to get him to a doctor, and if he dies, then Mae will be hanged. This terrifies the rest of the Tucks, but Winnie surprises herself by telling them not to worry, because everything is going to be all right. On the ride back, Winnie tries to think about how to help her friends, because Mae will not be able to die even if she was executed.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Winnie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/winnie-foster) stands with her arms around [Angus](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/angus-tuck) as the [constable](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/the-constable) declares that the [man in the yellow suit](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/the-man-in-the-yellow-suit) isn't dead yet. [Mae](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/mae-tuck) explains that she hit the man because he was trying to take Winnie away against her will. Winnie turns to face the constable and says that the Tucks didn't kidnap her; she came because she wanted to and because they're her friends. The constable shrugs and they all look at the man in the yellow suit, who looks like a marionette. Winnie glances at Angus, who's staring at the body with envy. Winnie touches him and he takes her hand.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Standing up to the constable and telling him that she wasn't kidnapped shows that Winnie now understands that she has the power to talk to adults and influence them using her point of view. Angus's envious stare reminds the reader that what Angus wants most is to finish his cycle of life and die, though it also suggests that he fixates on his desire to die too much to effectively live.

***Summary Part 2:***

The [constable](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/the-constable) tells [Angus](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/angus-tuck) to take the [man in the yellow suit](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/the-man-in-the-yellow-suit) inside and look after him until he can send a doctor. He says that he has to take [Mae](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/mae-tuck) and put her in jail, and he needs to take [Winnie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/winnie-foster) home. [Miles](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/miles-tuck) and [Jesse](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/jesse-tuck) promise Mae that they'll get her out, but the constable explains that if the man dies, Mae will be hanged. Winnie watches as Jesse and Miles carry the man inside and Mae swings up onto the horse. Winnie looks at Angus and says with conviction that it's going to be okay. The words feel strange to say, but she knows she'd want to hear them right now.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Telling Angus that it's going to be okay allows Winnie to channel things she's likely heard from her parents and grandmother and use those comforts to help someone else. This is a major point in Winnie's coming of age, as it shows her stepping into an adult role and understanding that adults, just like children, sometimes need reassurance and comfort.

***Summary Part 3:***

The [constable](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/the-constable) swings onto his own horse behind [Winnie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/winnie-foster) and Winnie again assures [Angus](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/angus-tuck) that things will be okay. She sits up straight and watches [Mae](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/mae-tuck) ride in front of her. Winnie looks at the meadows and fields around her and knows that, more than anything else, she has to stop Mae from hanging. She knows that even if Mae were a cold-blooded murderer and deserved to die, she can't die.

***Analysis Part 3:***

After this experience, Winnie understands that by keeping Mae from the gallows, it is possible for her to make a mark on the world and do something useful. Her recognition that Mae can't die, even if she should, also shows that she's beginning to develop a more nuanced idea of what constitutes morality.

***Quotations:***

***Quotation 1:***

The one glance she gave him fixed his appearance forever in Winnie's mind. She turned her eyes away quickly, looking to Tuck for relief. But Tuck was not looking back at her. Instead, he was gazing at the body on the ground, leaning forward slightly, his brows drawn down, his mouth a little open. It was as if he were entranced and—yes, envious—like a starving man looking through a window at a banquet. Winnie could not bear to see him like that. (20.12)

***Explanation:***

Yikes. It's at this moment that Winnie realizes just how tragic Tuck's situation is—he feels so trapped that he envies a man who has just been beaten to a pulp.

***Quotation 2:***

For the only thing she could think of was the clear and terrible necessity: Mae Tuck must never go to the gallows. Whatever happened to the man in the yellow suit, Mae Tuck must not be hanged. Because if all they had said was true, then Mae, even if she were the cruelest of murderers and deserved to be put to death—Mae Tuck would not be able to die. (20.25)

***Explanation:***

When Mae is threatened by execution, the worry isn't that she' s going to die. It's that she can't. And you know what that would mean: the jig is up.

***Quotation3:***

"You wanted to [come with the Tucks]?" echoed the constable, his eyes wide with disbelief. "You wanted to?"

"That's right," said Winnie unflinchingly. "They're my friends." (20.9-10)

***Explanation:***

Friends stick up for each other, and that's exactly what Winnie does for the Tucks. She totally could have thrown them under the bus, but she stands by them, protecting them from a pretty nasty punishment.