***Tuck Everlasting***

***Chapter 23***

***Summary and Analysis:***

***Brief Summary***

Winnie believed the day was the longest day of her life. The air was hot and unmoving and the time seemed to be as unmoving as the air around her. She had hidden the bottle Jesse gave her in a bureau drawer and decided there was nothing left to do but wait. Her family was sitting in the parlor, fanning themselves and drinking lemonade. They were more unkempt than she had ever seen them. She decided she liked this side of them, but did not stay in the parlor with them. She took her lemonade and returned to her room.

Later that evening, Winnie went back out into the yard as the day was cooling down. She noted that the sky had changed, becoming heavier, the clouds thickening. Even the trees of the wood were turning their leaves upside down with the hope of rain. When she went back inside, she told her family it would probably rain. The family wanted the rain, but did not want to close the house up. The wind was finally beginning to blow and give them some relief. However, they closed the windows and retired for the night. Winnie sat in her room listening to the wind moving the gate and trees surrounding the Foster's home.

She had three hours before she was to meet Jesse. She walked around her room, sat in her rocking chair, laid on her bed and thought. She knew she would have to do this, but she was beginning to fell guilty for misusing the trust of her parents again.

She argued with herself, saying they had never told her not to do this and yet she knew they would think it was wrong. She feared what would happen when the constable found her in the morning. She finally decided she would make them understand. She believed whole-heartedly the Tucks needed her to take care of them. Whether this was true of not, she would not let Mae hang.

She started thinking of Jesse, wondering if she would drink the water when she turned seventeen and wondering if she would regret it. She remembered Tuck telling her, "It's something you don't find out how you feel until afterwards." The thought came to her that the Tuck's story may not be true. They were just crazy, but she loved them and then she fell asleep.

She startled herself awake and scrambled to the hallway to check the time. She had five minutes to meet Jesse. It was time to go.

***Brief Analysis:***

The author uses this chapter to show the conflict within Winnie. She shows the arguments within Winnie's mind and the way she comes to her own conclusions about what she needs to do.

***Summary and Analysis:***

The day continues, long and hot. Winnie's mother and grandmother sit in the parlor fanning themselves and sipping lemonade, but Winnie spends most of the day alone and thinking. She knows that her family would not approve of what she is going to do, but she believes that it is the right thing. She wonders what will happen when the constable and her family find her in the cell in the morning, but then she thinks of her beloved, innocent Tucks and realizes that they need her to help them. She wonders if she should drink the water and marry Jesse. She falls asleep briefly but wakes up five minutes before midnight.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

The day is the longest and hottest of the year. Nothing stirs in Treegap, the wood, or the surrounding countryside. Winnie's [mother](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters) and [Granny](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters) sit in the parlor in a surprisingly unladylike state of disarray, sipping lemonade. Though [Winnie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/winnie-foster) thinks this makes them more interesting, she takes her lemonade upstairs and sits in her [rocking chair](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/symbols/winnie-s-rocking-chair), after hiding the bottle of water from [Jesse](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/jesse-tuck). Winnie rocks in time to the ticking of the grandfather clock in the hallway. After supper, Winnie sees that the sky is thickening and the air is growing heavy. She believes it's going to rain, and her family closes all the windows when they go to bed.

***Analysis Part 1:***

The new and interesting way that Winnie's mother and Granny behave on this day shows Winnie that even as these women act separate from the natural world by cleaning, organizing, and staying indoors, they actually are still a part of the natural world. Returning to her rocking chair allows Winnie to gain comfort from something that she doesn't have to explain herself to, as her mother would certainly notice and be suspicious if Winnie were seeking extra comfort from her.

***Summary Part 2:***

At nine that night, [Winnie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/winnie-foster) wanders around her room. She's excited, but she also feels very guilty. She knows that she shouldn't go down to the jailhouse and switch places with [Mae](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/mae-tuck) and she wonders if her parents will ever trust her again. Around 11 o'clock, Winnie lies down and thinks of [Angus](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/angus-tuck), [Mae](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/mae-tuck), [Miles](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/miles-tuck), and [Jesse](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tuck-everlasting/characters/jesse-tuck). She thinks that they seem helpless and too trusting, and they need her help. She turns her thoughts to Jesse and wonders if, when she's 17, she'll really drink the water and if she'll be sorry later. Winnie reasons it's probably not even true and the Tucks are crazy, though she loves them anyway. She falls asleep and wakes up just before midnight.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Winnie's ability to wonder whether her parents will trust her again shows that now, she knows and understands that her actions have consequences and affect more people than just herself. This choice to go down to the jailhouse will have negative consequences for Winnie's family--it will make them look bad, she will look disrespectful, and it's also illegal. However, her recognition that she should do it anyway suggests that acting in the service of friends makes these negative consequences easier to live with.