

Chapter 26

In this chapter of "Maniac Magee," the bond between Maniac and Grayson deepens as they share stories and play baseball together. Each time Grayson begins a story, Maniac reaches into the equipment bags to pull out baseball gear, enhancing their conversations. The two engage in spirited baseball activities, moving from tossing a ball to playing more complex games on the field, where Grayson imparts valuable lessons about the mechanics of the game: how to hit to the opposite field, how to predict a fly ball's trajectory, and even how to throw a curveball. Grayson, despite his age, transforms into a knowledgeable mentor around the baseball diamond.

While Grayson's pitching skills may have faded, he entertains Maniac with a specialty pitch called the "stopball." Grayson claims that this pitch is so unique that no one can hit it, and he always announces it beforehand. Despite his belief, Maniac finds the pitch baffling; he watches carefully but consistently struggles to make contact, unable to tell if he's swinging at the ball or listening to Grayson's explanations.

As autumn sets in, with trees displaying vibrant colors, the duo spends their time together playing ball throughout their afternoons. Their relationship takes an interesting turn when Grayson encourages Maniac to go to school. Maniac casually reveals that he does attend school, leading Grayson to discover the array of books Maniac has been collecting from the library using the money Grayson gives him for snacks. Maniac's passion for learning shines through when he shares his newfound knowledge about geometry with Grayson, proving the properties of isosceles triangles. This prompts Grayson to request Maniac teach him how to read, indicating the growing friendship and mutual respect between the two characters.