

# Chapter 18

In this chapter of "Maniac Magee," Amanda attempts to convince Maniac to stay with the family, emphasizing that he's letting the opinions of a "nutty old coot" influence him. She brushes off the chalked message on the house, suggesting it's no big deal and instead a motivation for her mother to clean, restoring her happiness. However, Maniac feels deep concern for Amanda and her family's emotions, which she doesn't grasp. Their conversation evolves into playful yet pointed banter, revealing the tension between them.

As Amanda expresses her worries about Maniac's survival without her, he responds with sarcastic retorts, lightening the mood while masking his genuine feelings. Despite the humor, Amanda is visibly frustrated with how easily he dismisses the gravity of the situation and their friendship. She asserts that if he leaves, he shouldn't expect to return or take any of her belongings, particularly her precious encyclopedia.

When Amanda shares that he can't get a library card without a proper address, she realizes her words hit a sensitive spot with him. This abrupt confession changes the atmosphere, and Maniac departs, causing Amanda to lash out in her feelings of helplessness. She spends the following day frantically searching for him, visiting various neighborhoods and tirelessly pedaling her bike, growing increasingly worried. Eventually, Maniac returns late that night, and Amanda's irritation subsides, replaced with a subtle relief.

The following morning, a situation unfolds that gives Amanda an idea, watching Maniac help a child with a yo-yo string knot. Inspired, she wonders how she could help ensure Maniac's acceptance among others. She approaches him with a proposition, hinting that if certain conditions are met, perhaps the community's perspective on him could change, indicating her desire for him to remain part of their lives. Amanda shares her thoughts on Cobble's Knot, which might serve as a solution to their dilemma.