***The Giver* Notes English 1201**

**Chapter One**

-Jonas feels scared about the ceremony of twelve because it is almost December. He is very careful about precision of language and later realizes that apprehensive is the appropriate word, not scared.

-He felt scared when an aircraft had flown over the community. The community were ordered inside their homes. They are given orders through speakers. The aircraft was just a pilot who had lost his way. He will be released for his mistake.

-Release is final, a terrible punishment and a failure. You are not even allowed to joke about it.

-His friend Asher always mixed up his words.

-When you do something wrong, you have to make a standard apology. They have to share their feelings at the evening meal. There are no animals.

-Lily describes being angry at a child from another community who didn’t follow the rules. His community possibly had different rules. All the surrounding communities have similar rules, with minor differences.

-Father is a nurturer. He is worries about a newchild who is not growing as fast as he should be and his not sleeping soundly. He may get released. Father is going to ask for permission to take him home for extra care.

-There are only two occasions where release is not punishment: the elderly (it is a celebration) and newchildren. When someone breaks three rules, they are also released. The disgrace of being released this way is unspeakable.

-Mother works at the department of justice.

-There is only one male and female child allowed in a family.

-After Jonas tells his parents he is apprehensive about the ceremony of twelve, they want to talk to him privately.

**Chapter Two**

-At the ceremony of the ones, a child is given a name and placed in a family. Only fifty children are born every year. They are named by the committee in advance. Father broke the rules and looked up Gabriel’s name.

-At nine, children get their bikes and the girls remove their hair ribbons. It is against the rules to ride a bike before nine, but most people are taught by their siblings.

-Rules are very hard to change and it is up to the receiver to make a decision. He is the most important elder and he lives and works alone.

-Twelve is the most important ceremony. You are given your life assignment. Father was sure what his assignment would be because he spent a lot of time nurturing children. The selection is made by a group of elders who observe the children. They are required to complete volunteer hours.

-Jonas has no idea what his assignment will be. People are rarely disappointed with their selections, but if they are, they can appeal it. Jonas worries about Asher’s assignment because he is never serious and makes a game out of everything.

-After the age of twelve, they lose track of their age. You can look it up in the hall of open records. After twelve, you move into a new group of friends and recreation is no longer important. They still go to school though.

-At eight, the comfort object is taken away. They are imaginary creatures (animals).

-Jonas is a thoughtful, quiet and likable person. He is unquestioning is his acceptance of his society, but yet he is disturbed by a sense of unease. Although the society is benign (everyone’s needs are met) there is an underlying sense of unease created by the fact that everything is controlled by the elders. Life is very orderly in Jonas’s world. There are rules governing feelings, language and behaviour. Obedience is expected and crucial. There is no privacy. Even the smallest details of one’s life (like keeping hair ribbons neat) are overseen by the ruling society.

**Chapter Three**

-The family takes Gabe home. Lily points out that the child has pale eyes like Jonas. Everyone else in the community had dark eyes except for female five. Jonas thinks he gives his eyes depth, like “looking into the clear water of the river, down to the bottom, where things might lurk which hadn’t been discovered yet”. This is referring to his ability to give and receive memories, a capacity for knowledge and understanding that his family does not have.

-It is considered rude to draw attention to things that are different about people.

-Mirrors are rare in the community. There is no need of them.

-Lily says she wishes to be a birthmother some day but this makes mother upset because there is very little honour in that assignment. Birthmothers get good food and gentle exercise periods and get to play games. They have three births in three years and then they are labourers for the rest of their lives. They also would never get to raise their children.

-They start volunteer hours at eight.

-Lily is so talkative that Jonas thinks she would make a good speaker.

-Things all have the same “nondescript shade”.

-Jonas was playing catch with Asher with an apple when he noticed that it changed in midair four times. He has no idea how to explain it so he takes the apple home to study it. An announcement chastising him for hoarding food made him return it and apologize. The announcement singled him out without saying his name. Jonas doesn’t know it yet but he is beginning to “see beyond”.

**Chapter Four**

-It is a rule against bragging, so people are not allowed to talk about their accomplishments.

-Jonas goes to his volunteer work at the House of the Old. Fiona and Asher are there as well. Jonas likes Fiona. She is a good student, quiet and polite, and she had a sense of fun as well.

-If you do not complete all your volunteer hours, you are not given an assignment until later with no celebration, which is a disgrace.

-Jonas is happy that he chose to do his volunteer hours in a variety of places so that he could experience the differences, but it also left him with no idea what his assignment will be.

-He joins Asher and Fiona bathing the elderly. He bathes Larissa. It reminds him of his father bathing Gabriel. It is against the rules for adults to look at another’s nakedness, except for the old and newchildren.

-Roberto got released that morning Larissa tells him. “It was wonderful” she says. They tell the person’s whole life. Sometimes this can be boring if a person didn’t live an interesting life (like Edna who was a birthmother).

-The release has several steps: telling of life story, toast, chanted the anthem, and goodbye speeches. Roberto was thrilled to go. Jonas asks her where people go when they are released. She replies that no one knows. They simply walk through a special door in the releasing room. They don’t allow children to watch releases.

**Chapter Five**

-Jonas says that he rarely dreams. They are required to share their dreams with their family. Every single aspect of their lives are controlled and monitored, even their unconscious minds. Dream telling begins at the age of three.

-Jonas has a dream that he is in the House of the Old but there is only one tub there and he is alone with Fiona. He had taken off his tunic and was sweating. He was angry at Fiona for not taking him seriously. He wanted her to get in the tub so he could bathe but she refused. He knew it was wrong but could feel the wanting strongly. Jonas feels embarrassed to tell his family this dream. His mother tells him this dream is his first stirrings and now he can take treatment for them. Stirrings are reported through dream telling. It happens to everyone. They treat sexual desire like a disease that has to be destroyed with pills. The pills have to be taken until they go to the House of the Old. If you forget your pill, the stirrings come back.

-Jonas feels proud to join everyone else in taking the pill but he found the stirrings pleasurable and he wishes to have them again. However, then the feeling fades away and his stirrings are gone.

-It is “always better, less rude to talk about things that were the same”.

**Chapter Six**

-Gabe has been labelled uncertain and given an additional year to see if he will develop.

-The family had to sign a pledge to agree not to become attached to Gabe and to give him upwhen the time comes.

-Gabe is still not the right weight and is not sleeping through the night. Such a child is usually released and labelled “inadequate”. Father argued for Gabe so that he could have another chance. The society operates on Darwin’s “survival of the fittest” theory. Darwin proposed that animals have developed and adapted over time with only those that are the strongest and the best fitted to their environment surviving. This society does that with humans, releasing a child who is weaker or less adequate than others. Hitler also did a similar thing in Nazi Germany, and destroyed people he deemed “inferior” so that he could have a perfect Aryan Germany. The process is brutally cruel and unjust, but they do not realize it.

-Jonas sits through the ceremonies bored.

-Asher shares a story about someone who didn’t like his assignment so he jumped in the river and swam to another community and was never seen again.

-You can apply for release and go Elsewhere. Jonas wonders why anyone would be unable to fit in here where life here is so organized and perfect. This will later become ironic as Jonas discovers the truth of the society.

-Spouses are chosen by matching people’s disposition, energy level, intelligence and interests.

-When someone is “lost” the community holds a ceremony of loss in which the lost person’s name is repeated over and over until it fades out of consciousness and that person is forgotten forever. Then a new child is given the lost child’s name and there is a murmur if replacement ceremony. This shows how little value they place on members of their society. People are not properly mourned or remembered and they are replaced quickly and easily.

-The front buttoned jackets that children get at seven are a symbol of their independence while the back buttoned jackets represent interdependence

**Chapter Seven**

-Finally the other ceremonies are over except for twelve.

-The chief elder makes a speech and refers to the group of twelve’s but makes no reference to Jonas.

-She tells a story about Asher mixed up his words when he was younger. He asked for a smack instead of a snack and got repeatedly beaten with the discipline wand as a result. It was so bad that for a period of time, he stopped talking altogether.

-Asher is chosen as recreation director. Fiona is given caretaker of the old.

-The elder skips over Jonas and he thinks he has done something wrong.

**Chapter Eight**

-Jonas is terrified and humiliated. He is called to the stage. The chief elder tells him that he has not been assigned but selected to be the next receiver of memory. The community only has one receiver and he trains the successor. The current receiver also has pale eyes. He has been the receiver for a very long time. The last selection for receiver failed ten years ago.

-Jonas finds out that he will live life alone and apart. It is the most honoured job in the community.

-Jonas has all the qualities to be a receiver: intelligence, integrity, courage (he finds out the job will involve physical pain), wisdom (he doesn’t have it yet but will attain it), and the capacity to see beyond.

-The community has never known pain. They are always and immediately given medication.

-He will receive a pain so intense that it cannot be described.

-The same thing that happened to the apple as Jonas is looking at the people’s faces in the auditorium (he is seeing the red tones in their skin) so he tells the elder that he thinks he may have the capacity to see beyond but he does not understand it yet.

-The crowd cheers him on and accepts him as the new receiver. Jonas is scared and has no idea what will happen to him.

**Chapter Nine**

-Jonas already begins to feel disconnected from his peers. Life will no longer be the same. Jonas finds out the previous receiver was female and they are not supposed to speak her name. This is the highest sign of disgrace. Jonas’s parents don’t know what happened to her and they never saw her again after the failure.

-Jonas gets his new rules. He is to go to the annex room in the House of the Old every day after school for training, then go directly home after his training, he can ask anyone anything (he can be rude), he can’t talk about his training with anyone, he does not have to tell his dreams anymore, he can only have medication when its unrelated to his training, he cannot apply for release and he is allowed to lie now.

-His schedule leaves no time for recreation.

-He feels like he will never be rude. He can easily stop telling his dreams because he rarely dreams anyway. He says that it never occurred to him to apply for release. He begins to wonder fearfully if it is possible that people have been lying all along.

-The failure of the previous receiver adds suspense. We are wondering what happened to her and it makes Jonas’s task more daunting and terrifying.

**Chapter Ten**

-Jonas goes to training with Fiona. The receptionist treats him with respect. It is the only door in the community that is locked. The door is locked to ensure the receiver’s privacy and so he can have concentration.

-Jonas notices that the receiver does not give the standard accepting of apology response. This shows that he is outside the rules of society and different.

-The room is filled with books. Jonas never knew that other books existed besides the book of rules, dictionary and the community volume.

-The receiver looks very old and tired. The job has aged him a lot. The receiver went through the process that Jonas went through. His job is to transmit all the memories he has inside him. They are the memoires of the past, of the whole world, of all time, and of Elsewhere too. Jonas thought there was only here and now and this society. In the room, the receiver experiences the memories over and over again. “It is how wisdom comes and how we shape out future”.

-The receiver is weighted down with memories. He describes it like sliding down a hill. It is fun and exciting at first, but after a while, the snow builds up the runners of the sled and it is hard to move and you need to push the sled downhill. Jonas has no idea what he is talking about because there aren’t any hills or sleds or snow anymore.

-Jonas notices that this is the only room in the community where you can turn the speaker off.

-Jonas lays on the bed and takes off his tunic. The receiver tells him he will transmit the memory of snow. He places his hands on Jonas’s back.

**Chapter Eleven**

-Jonas gains his first memory of sliding down a hill. It is as if he is physically in that moment while still existing in the annex room. He learns the concepts of snow, hill, sled and runners. He enjoys the memory and wants to do it again.

-The receiver says that this memory is very old. Things have been this way for a very long time.

-They used climate control to get rid of snow to make the agricultural periods better and weather made the transportation of goods difficult. Hills also made transportation a problem so they got rid of them too. Jonas wishes they still had those things.

-The receiver tells him that this position has honour but no true power.

-The second memory Jonas receives is sunshine. The third memory is the pain of a sun burn.

-The receiver says the failure with the previous receiver has taught him to start with good memories. The receiver feels terribly weary and sad after the transmission is over.

-He tells Jonas to call him the Giver from now on. Jonas is excited and positive about the process now because he has no idea of the pain to come.

**Chapter Twelve**

-Jonas dreams about sliding down a hill and he feels that there is some place, some destination at the end of the hill. This dream will later be significant. He had a good feeling about it and the place was welcoming.

-Gabe is still not sleeping through the night.

-Fiona tells him they use a discipline wand on the elderly like they do with children.

-Jonas gains the capacity to see beyond again. This time it happens with Fiona’s hair. Red is the first color that he gains. He tells the Giver about it and he says it happened to him to but in a different way. The Giver tells Jonas to recall the sliding memory and to look at the color of the sled. Jonas looks at the books in the room and they change too but the change is fleeting.

-Jonas finds out that there used to be different races but genetic science was used to make everyone the same. Red hair bothers the scientists because they can’t get rid of it.

-Jonas realizes already that they should not have gone to a state of sameness. The Giver said it took him many years to reach that conclusion. Jonas gains the memory of a rainbow.

**Chapter Thirteen**

-Jonas now sees all the color, but they don’t last long. It will be a long time before he has them to keep. Jonas says he wants the power to make choices. The danger is that people will make the wrong choice. It would be frightening, they say, if people got to choose their own jobs and mate. It’s safer this way. Jonas becomes angry that people are satisfied with this life and frustrated that he can’t give them the memories. He tries giving the color red to Asher, but fails.

-Jonas gains a memory of hunters killing and ripping the tusks off an elephant. Another elephant mourns and stokes the corpse and places leaves over it. The animals in this memory have more respect and compassion for life than the humans in his society. Jonas tries to explain to Lily that her comfort object was once alive, but she doesn’t believe him.

-The Giver reveals that he once had a spouse. She now lives with the childless adults. Jonas can apply for a spouse but his living arrangements will have to be different because his spouse cannot read the books he is allowed access to.

-The Giver says his whole life is the memories. He walks, eats and is called before the elders. He is called before them only when they are facing something that they haven’t dealt with before. The Giver wishes they would change things and ask for his advice more often.

-The giver has to hold all the pain so no one else has to feel it. Jonas finds out that when the previous receiver failed, all her memories went to the people and it was too much for them to handle.

-The giver says that Jonas’s teachers know nothing because they don’t have the memories.

**Chapter Fourteen**

-Jonas goes back to the hill. The sled goes over a bump and he gets thrown off and breaks his leg. The pain he describes is like it’s on fire. The ache lingers with him. He goes home and can’t tell his family what is wrong.

-Now all his training involves pain. The giver ends it off with a pleasant memory. He gains the memory neglect and hunger. The memory of hunger led the giver to advise the elders not to increase the rate of births. The last time the elders came to the giver was when the plane flew overhead. They wanted to shoot it down, but the giver advised them not to because he in the past there have been memoires of how in the past people destroyed themselves by acting quickly and in fear.

-Jonas wonders why they can’t share the memories. Then it would be easier if everyone shared a little of the burden. Jonas wants to change it but the giver says that it’s always been done and the decision was made a long time ago.

-Gabe is developing well but he still isn’t sleeping through the night.

-We discover that the society gets rid of one twin if they are identical. They do this by birth weight. Jonas hopes there is someone like Larissa in Elsewhere who receive the twin.

-Jonas puts Gabe in his room. In the middle of the night he gets restless as he’s patting his back and he discovers that he can transmit memories to him. He gives him the memory of the sailboat to calm him. He decides not to tell. He may not be allowed to do it. The power frightens him.

**Chapter Fifteen**

-He gains the memory of war. It is a scene of carnage. There are horses, filth and people dying all around him. A boy close to his age asks for water. Jonas gives it to him and then he dies. Jonas is injured too.

-The Giver says “forgive me” when it’s over because of the intensity and cruelty of the memory. Jonas has seen someone die for the first time.

**Chapter Sixteen**

-Jonas doesn’t want the memories and longs to have his simple childhood back. He has experienced a lot of happy memories such as a birthday party, museums, riding a horse, the joy of solitude, a campfire in the woods, and the Giver’s favourite memory-Christmas. From the memory of Christmas, Jonas gains the concepts of family, love and grandparents. There are no grandparents in his society. He could look his grandparents and great grandparents up in the Hall of open records, but he has no relationship with them. Families do stay connected after they move out of the dwelling. When the Giver says “it works”, he is being sarcastic and using verbal irony. Clearly, the Giver and Jonas have discovered that arranging families this way does not work at all. Jonas says it works this way only because they have never known a different way. Jonas wishes that the Giver could be his grandparent. Jonas doesn’t quite realize the danger in having real families (the pain involved in losing people you love) and he says that it would be dangerous to have open fire in a home.

-Jonas goes home and asks his parents if they love him. The word no longer holds meaning. They say they take pride in his accomplishments and enjoy him but the word love is inappropriate. Jonas lies to his parents for the first time when he says he understands this.

-The nurturers are optimistic about Gabriel’s future but when he’s not with Jonas he still doesn’t sleep well. Jonas keeps giving him positive memories and he tells him that things could change and there could be love.

-Jonas stops taking his pills. Something inside the memories told him to throw them away.

**Chapter Seventeen**

-The community has an unscheduled holiday and there is no work or school.

-The stirrings come back and Jonas feels guilty and embarrassed but he can’t go back to having no feelings. He can keep colors now.

-He begins experiencing a new depth of feelings. He realizes that everyone else’s feelings are fake and superficial. He gets upset watching his friends play war and asks them not to play it anymore. He remembers the dying boy and the horrible war scene from his memory and panics and almost cries. Asher gets annoyed that he ruined their game. He tries to explain the meaning to them but they do not want to listen.

-He realizes now that he is attracted to Fiona. He loves both Fiona and Asher but they can never love him back. He feels hopeless like he can’t change anything.

-Gabriel can now walk. Once children can walk the discipline wand can be used on the. It is almost December again.

-Father lies to him about release and tells him that he weighs the twins and cleans up the smaller one and makes him comfortable. Then someone from Elsewhere comes and gets him, he tells Jonas.

**Chapter Eighteen**

-We find out that the Giver is allowed to apply for release after the new receiver is trained. Jonas is not looking forward to being the new receiver. The previous receiver was named Rosemary and she was intelligent and eager to learn. The Giver loved her and he loves Jonas too. She received well and was happy to experience new things. For the first five weeks of training he gave her memoires of poverty, hunger and terror. Then she kissed him and went and applied for release. She was allowed to apply for release. He never saw her again. Jonas says that if something happened to him, his memories would be released to the community. The Giver says that when Rosemary was released, he was too hurt and angry to help the community through the memories. He suggests that they could fix the society by having Jonas disappear and the Giver helping them through the memoires. The giver says they will talk about it later.

**Chapter** **Nineteen**

-Jonas wishes he could watch his father release the twin. He still thinks that release is a positive thing. Ironically he thinks “his father was such a gentle man”. This shows that he is no way prepared for what he is about to watch. The giver tells him that he can watch the release because it is recorded in the Hall of closed records.

-The release room is just an ordinary room, windowless and empty except for a table with some equipment on it. The way father talks is eerie and disturbing. He talks in baby talk and uses the special voice that he uses with Gabriel. This shows that he does not question nor feel any emotion about his job. He gives the child a lethal injection in the forehead and he is joking around and laughing in the process. Jonas recognizes the newborn’s posture and expression from the war memory where the young boy died. They put the child’s body in a carton (he does not even get a coffin or burial) and throw him into a garbage shoot.

-The Giver got to watch Rosemary’s release and she chose to inject herself. Jonas now becomes disillusioned. He feels a terrible pain and hates the world he lives in.

**Chapter Twenty**

-Jonas is so upset that he doesn’t want to go home. He stays with the Giver for the night. He becomes sarcastic and bitter towards his society and starts mocking the speaker: “I will kill people sir”. The Giver tells him that they don’t know the difference, they are just doing what they are told. Jonas wonders about Fiona and the Giver tells him that she is already being trained in the “fine art of release”.

-The Giver says the worst part of the memories is the loneliness of it. They need to be shared. Having Jonas with him for the past year, has made the Giver realize that things have to change. They make a plan for Jonas to escape. If the plan fails, Jonas will probably be killed. He doesn’t care because life the way it is is not worth living. He wants the Giver to go with him but the Giver must stay and help the people deal with the new memories. If Jonas leaves, he must never come back. The Giver is getting weak now and can no longer see color. For the Giver, it all started with him gaining the capacity to hear beyond (music). He wants to give it to Jonas but Jonas wants him to keep it for himself.

-Jonas goes home and lies to his parents. The plan is as follows: over the next two weeks the Giver will transfer to Jonas all his memories of courage and strength, Jonas will leave in the middle of the night before the ceremony, he will leave his bike and extra clothes by the river, he will walk back to the annex room, he will leave a note for his parents saying he went for a morning bike ride, his parents will go on to the ceremony not wanting to point out that Jonas was missing because it would reflect on their parenting, everyone would be so caught up in the ceremony that they would not realize he was missing, the Giver would order a vehicle, he will send the driver on some errand and while he is gone Jonas will hide in the storage area of the vehicle with food that they saved up over a while. The people will notice that Jonas is missing but they won’t disrupt the ceremony. By the time they sent out searchers to find him, he would be well on the way to Elsewhere. The Giver will go to the ceremony and announce that Jonas was lost in the river. He would begin a ceremony of loss and help them with the memories. The Giver says his work will be done when he’s finished helping the community become whole and change. When he is done, he wants to be with his daughter, Rosemary.

**Chapter Twenty-One**

-The plans for an orderly escape all fall apart when the decision is made to release Gabriel the next morning. So Jonas leaves on his father’s bicycle and takes Gabe with him. He feels no fear or regret about leaving his community behind. He didn’t get to say goodbye to the Giver. We find out that even Father voted for Gabe to be released after fighting for him previously.

-Jonas has already committed three crimes: he left his dwelling in the middle of the night, he took food and he had stolen his father’s bicycle. He is so disgusted by his father that he doesn’t even want to own anything belonging to him but his father’s bike has a child seat in it. There had been no time for Jonas to receive the memoires of courage and strength so he must rely on what he has. It is not safe to travel in daylight so they travel at night. He hides in the underbrush during the day, drinks from rivers and eats what he can find in the fields. His legs begin to ache but they are getting stronger. The search planes begin to come. The planes use heat seeking devices so he transmit memories to Gabe of snow so that they will be cold when the plane’s fly over. Jonas begins to feel his memories growing weaker. Eventually, the frequency of the planes diminish. Then they stop coming completely.

**Chapter Twenty-Two**

-Jonas hits a rock and knocks the bike over. He twisted his ankle and scraped his knees. They start to ride in daylight. The landscape now becomes very unfamiliar. They saw wildlife, a waterfall and a bird. Jonas feels very happy as he enjoys this new world. However, the fear of starvation now becomes very real. Jonas uses Gabe’s blanket to catch some fish. He tries to use his fading memory to recall memories of food. He remembers the time in childhood when he misused words and said that he was starving, He knows now that he had never been starving. If he had stayed in the community, he would never be starving. However, he would be starving for other things like love, color and feelings. If he stayed, Gabriel would be dead so he had no choice in the matter. Jonas finally begins to see hills. Jonas is very weakened now. The weather changes and it begins to rain. Jonas cries because he is afraid that he cannot save Gabriel. He no longer cares about himself.

**Chapter Twenty-Three**

-Jonas feels certain that the destination lay ahead of him. He begins to lose hope that he will reach it though. It starts to snow. Gabriel had become very weak and is not responding at all. A snowflake lands on his eyelashes. He begins to climb a steep hill, leaving the bike behind. He thinks how easy it would be to just give up and lay in the snow, but he must keep going. He has lost his memories now. He tries to transfer a memory of sunshine to Gabriel. It comes, but is very weak. Gabriel stirs. Jonas becomes alert now. He falls down and his spirit is renewed again by another brief memory of warmth. The warm memory fades fast though.

-When he is almost at the top of the hill, he begins to feel very happy. He starts to remember happy memories with his family, friends and the Giver. He remembers this place. He is now able to form memories of his own. He knows there is warmth and light up ahead. He finds a sled at the top of the hill and begins to slide down. His heart “surged with hope”. As he goes down the hill, he feels himself losing consciousness. He feels like he is heading towards “the place he had always felt was waiting, the Elsewhere that held their future and their past”. He sees lights at the bottom of the hill and he knows it is a place where families kept and created memories and they celebrated love. The place is similar to the Christmas memory that the Giver gave Jonas. He feels like people are waiting for them. He hears music and people singing for the first time. He thinks he hears it behind him too, in the place he just left, but maybe it was only an echo.