

FADE IN:

EXT. RECREATION AREA - DAY

A burning-red apple flies through space. As the pristine orb draws its downward arc in the sky, it somehow loses its brilliant hue.

JONAS, 11, catches the apple and promptly inspects the odd fruit, squinting his pale eyes.

ASHER (O.C.)  
Toss it back, Jonas!

Twenty yards across from Jonas, a round-faced boy with unkempt hair, ASHER, 11, waves his arms. Jonas heaves the apple back toward his playmate, who drops it on the ground as it arrives.

JONAS  
Asher, have you noticed anything strange about that apple?

ASHER  
That it keeps jumping out of my hands?

Asher retrieves the fruit and tosses it back to Jonas. Against the grey sky, the change happens again: just for a flickering second, that brilliant, burning red overtakes the black-and-white.

Just as Jonas catches the apple, a voice blares out from a speaker-box mounted on the nearby building structure:

SPEAKER (V.O.)  
The recreational period has ended.  
Please return to your classrooms.

Immediately, obediently, Asher and the school of other children in the vicinity cease their games and start toward the building.

ASHER  
Come on, Jonas.

Jonas blinks over his pale irises in a fit. He stares nonplussed at the apple's now-grey skin. With classmates streaming by him, he furtively slips the fruit into a pocket on his tunic, and then trails his peers into the building.

CUT TO:

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2.

OPENING CREDITS: " T H E G I V E R "

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Muted colors. Simple décor. Gathered around the dining table with Jonas is his strikingly vanilla family unit: FATHER, 30's, MOTHER, 30's, and little LILY, only 7.

They have just finished their evening meal.

FATHER

Who wants to be the first to share feelings tonight?

Lily wiggles in her seat with impatience.

JONAS

You go, Lily.

LILY

Um, I felt very angry this afternoon. My childcare group was at the play area, and we had a visiting group of Sevens, and they didn't obey the rules at all! One of them - a male, I don't know his name - kept going right in front of the line for the slide! I felt so angry at him, so I made my hand like this:

Lily squeezes her tiny hand into a defiant fist.

MOTHER

Why do you think the visitors didn't obey the rules?

LILY

I don't know.

FATHER

Where were the visitors from, Lily-billy?

LILY

Our leader told us, but I - I don't remember. I must not have been paying attention. They were from far. Another community.

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3.

MOTHER

Do you think it's possible that the rules in their community may just be different than our own?

LILY

I suppose.

JONAS

You've visited other communities, haven't you?

Lily nods.

FATHER

How did you feel there?

LILY

Strange. They were learning usages that my group wasn't yet, so we felt... stupid.

FATHER

I'm thinking, Lily, about the boy today. Do you think it's possible that he --

The speaker-box planted high in the corner of the dwelling blares on:

SPEAKER (V.O.)

Attention. This is a reminder to male elevens that objects are not to be removed from the recreation area, and that snacks are to be eaten, not hoarded.

Jonas shrinks in his seat. His family unit subtly peeks over at the desk in the adjoining living area, where the apple rests next to a magnifying glass.

Father breaks the painful silence:

FATHER

Lily, do you think it's possible that the boy simply felt strange, being in a place he knew nothing about?

LILY

Yes.

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4.

FATHER

Are you still angry?

LILY

I guess not. I guess I feel a little sorry for him. And sorry I made a fist.

FATHER

Well, then. I have a concern at work. One of the newchildren in the Nurturing Center was born undersized.

LILY

What gender is it?

FATHER

Male. He's a lovely little male, but he isn't growing as fast as he should, and he doesn't sleep soundly. We have him in the extra

care section for supplemental nurturing, but the committee is beginning to talk about releasing him.

MOTHER

Oh, no. I know how sad that must make you feel.

Jonas and Lily nod sympathetically.

FATHER

Well, I'm going to keep trying. I may ask the committee for permission to bring him here at night. You know what the night-crew Nurturers are like. I think this little guy needs something extra.

MOTHER

Of course.

LILY

Maybe we could even keep him.

MOTHER

Lily, you know the rules.

LILY

Well...

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5.

Lily simpers. Mother grins.

FATHER

Jonas, you're up.

Jonas clears his throat and takes his time to find the correct words.

JONAS

I-I'm feeling... apprehensive.

FATHER

Why is that, son?

JONAS

I know there's nothing really to worry about, and that every adult has been through it. But it's the Ceremony I'm apprehensive about. It's almost December.

Little Lily whispers in awe:

LILY

The Ceremony of Twelve.

MOTHER

Lily, go get into your

nightclothes now. Father and I are going to stay here and talk to Jonas for a while.

LILY  
Privately?

Mother nods. Lily reluctantly scampers off.

FATHER  
(to Jonas)  
I'm glad you told us your feelings. You know, every December was exciting to me when I was young, too. Each one brings such changes.

MOTHER  
(to Father)  
But, to be honest, for you there wasn't the element of suspense that there is with Jonas' Ceremony.

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6.

FATHER  
Well, no. I was already fairly certain of what my Assignment would be.

JONAS  
But didn't the Elders select in secret? How could you have known?

FATHER  
Well, it was pretty clear what my aptitude was. I spent almost all my volunteer hours in the Nurturing Center. Of course the Elders knew that, from their observation. So I expected it, and was pleased, but not surprised, when my Assignment was announced as Nurturer.

MOTHER  
Yes, and I wasn't all that surprised when they announced my Assignment in the Department of Justice either.

JONAS  
Did the community still applaud even though they weren't surprised?

Father shoots Jonas a warm smirk.

FATHER  
Of course. The selections are very rarely big surprises. What's

important is the preparation  
you'll receive for your adult  
life.

JONAS

I know. Everyone knows that. I  
just don't know where the Elders  
might decide to place me.

Mother reassuringly reaches across the table and places her  
hand atop Jonas'.

MOTHER

There are very rarely  
disappointments, Jonas. There's no  
need to feel apprehensive.

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7.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

The furnishing is sparse: a bed in one corner, a desk in the  
other. Jonas pulls a wool blanket over himself in bed.

EXT. JONAS' DWELLING - NIGHT

Father sets a tidy bag of waste outside the front door.

INT. FATHER & MOTHER'S SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

There are two separate beds. Mother sits on the edge of hers  
and pops a small pill into her mouth, downing it with a  
glass of water.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Father twists open a medicine bottle and ingests the same  
type of tablet.

INT. LILY'S SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Lily tosses and turns in bed, hugging a stuffed animal of an  
elephant.

EXT. AREA OF DWELLINGS - NIGHT

Night-crew workers bustle about the clusters of uniform  
homes, collecting waste bags, sweeping pathways, operating  
flat-beds, or performing speaker-box maintenance.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Jonas falls fast asleep in a world of black-and-white.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Jonas sits perfectly upright in a desk amongst his similarly upright peers, as an instructor delivers a presentation on a view-screen at the head of the classroom. The screen displays schematics for a small airplane.

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8.

INSTRUCTOR

Inside, every search plane contains a screen on the front panel, where blurbs of heat show up as smears on the radar.

Jonas' eyes stray across the room to a girl seated on the other side: FIONA, 11. She has light, flowing hair, and a tragic, innocent face.

INSTRUCTOR (cont'd)

The sensors on the plane's exterior trace the warm object and show it to the pilot, who sends word down to the search parties to investigate. This way, the lost can always be rescued in the unlikely event --

Asher bursts through the classroom door, panting for air. He dashes to his desk, right next to Jonas.

ASHER

(to the class)

I apologize for inconveniencing my learning community. I left home at the correct time but, when I was along near the hatchery, the crew was separating some salmon. I guess I just got distraught, watching them.

His classmates struggle not to laugh.

THE CLASS

We accept your apology, Asher.

INSTRUCTOR

And I thank you, Asher, because once again you have provided an opportunity for a lesson in language. "Distraught" is too strong an adjective.

The instructor scrawls "Distracted" next to the word "Distraught" on the board. The immature class titters, as Asher sinks into his desk.

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9.

EXT. JONAS' DWELLING - DAY

Father parks his bicycle in a row of bikeports outside the dwelling. Lily rushes over as he unstraps the carrying basket from the back of the bike.

LILY  
Oh, look! He's here! Isn't he  
cute? Look how tiny he is! And he  
has funny eyes like yours, Jonas!

Jonas approaches the commotion, glaring at his sister.  
Father rebukes Lily with his tone:

FATHER  
Lily!

LILY  
(to Jonas)  
I'm sorry for being rude.

JONAS  
I accept your apology, Lily.

LILY  
But look how cute!

Inside the basket lay the precious NEWCHILD, no more than a few months old. The baby has pale, solemn eyes, akin to those of Jonas.

LILY  
Maybe he had the same birthmother  
as you, Jonas.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Father places a document filled with text and four lines for signature on the studying desk.

FATHER  
We must all sign this pledge  
promising not to become attached  
to our temporary guest. My plea  
for the newchild was accepted by  
the committee this afternoon.

Father's produces a fountain pen and signs on a line.

FATHER (cont'd)  
He has been labeled as Uncertain,  
and granted an extra year of  
nurturing before his Naming and  
(MORE)

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10.

FATHER (cont'd)  
Placement. That is, assuming he is  
able to reach the special set of  
weight and maturity standards that  
the committee has agreed upon.

The rest of the family unit form a queue to add their signatures.

FATHER (cont'd)

From now on, the newchild will spend every night with our family unit, so that I may nurture him to the best of my abilities. But we must agree to relinquish him, without protest or appeal, at next year's Ceremony when he is assigned a family unit of his own.

TIME CUT

Father, Mother, and Lily hover over the infant. Jonas busies himself with schoolwork at the desk, feigning disinterest in the newchild.

LILY

I think newchildren are so cute. When I become a twelve, I hope I get assigned to be a Birthmother.

MOTHER

Lily! Don't say that. There's very little honor in that Assignment.

LILY

But Natasha, the Ten who lives down the street, does most of her volunteer hours at the Birthing Center. She told me that the Birthmothers get wonderful food, they have gentle exercise periods, and most of the time they just play games while they're waiting. I think I'd enjoy that.

MOTHER

Lily, for the relatively short period of their lives that they're actually allowed to bear newchildren, that's true. But it doesn't last. When it's decided that their time is up in the Birthing Center, they all become simple Laborers in the Community

(MORE)

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11.

MOTHER (cont'd)

until they enter the House of the Old.

FATHER

Anyway, Lily-billy, Birthmothers never even get to see newchildren. If you enjoy the little ones so much, you should hope for an Assignment as Nurturer, like me.

MOTHER

When you're an Eight and you start your volunteer hours, you can try some at the Nurturing Center.

FATHER

Speaking of the Nurturing Center, I took a peek at the committee's advance list of names for next Ceremony's newchildren while I was there today.

LILY

Father!

FATHER

I know, I feel a little guilty. But I figured it would help in his nurturing if I could call the little guy by a name.

MOTHER

What is it?

FATHER

His name - if he makes it to the Naming without being released, of course - is set to be Gabriel.

LILY

Baby Gabriel.

FATHER

I call him Gabe, actually. I whisper it to him if no one else is around.

Jonas finishes his schoolwork. He snatches the dictionary from the desk's top shelf, and opens it to the middle of section K. His clear eyes fall upon the word "knowledge."

IMPACT CUT TO:

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12.

EXT. RECREATIONAL AREA - DAY

The burning-red apple soars high against the black-and-white sky. The color dissipates as the flung fruit turns downward on its path.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Jonas slams the dictionary shut. Father waves a stuffed animal over Gabe.

LILY

What's his comfort object called?

FATHER

Hippo.

Lily giggles.

LILY

Hippo? What a strange word. Hippo!  
Hippo!

EXT. CENTRAL PLAZA - DAY

Light bicycle traffic livens the plaza. Jonas rides through at a brisk pace. He passes neat rows of sizable building structures.

EXT. THE BRIDGE - DAY

Jonas pedals over a classic cobblestone bridge with still, black water pooled beneath it.

EXT. THE HOUSE OF THE OLD - DAY

Jonas stations his bicycle beside two others in the bikeports before the building.

INT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

A smiling female receptionist awaits. Enter Jonas.

RECEPTIONIST

Hello, Jonas.

He approaches the receptionist's desk and signs into a thick binder. She stamps the signature with an ink seal.

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13.

RECEPTIONIST

It's good to have some volunteers here today. We celebrated a release this morning, and that always throws the schedule off a little, so things tend to get backed up.

The receptionist scans another sheet of paper.

RECEPTIONIST

Let's see. Asher and Fiona are in the bathing room. Why don't you join them there?

INT. BATHING ROOM - DAY

Thick clouds of steam waft through the area. Serene sounds of dripping and splashing liquid arrest the room. Jonas quickly trades his tunic for a smock at a changing station.

ASHER (O.C.)

Hi, Jonas!

Jonas advances into the room and spots Asher washing one of the Old in a tub. Fiona is at work outside the adjacent tub, gently bathing an old man. The young groupmates exchange smiles and nods.

Jonas approaches a row of padded lounging chairs where the Old are waiting. He stops in front of an elderly woman:

JONAS

Your turn, Larissa.

Jonas escorts the woman to one of the many tubs, which automatically fills with warm water. LARISSA sheds her robe. Jonas helps her into the tub.

JONAS

Comfortable?

Jonas squeezes cleansing lotion over Larissa's frail body. He peeks over at Fiona and catches her tenderly patting the old man's naked body with an absorbent towel.

LARISSA

This morning we celebrated the release of Roberto. It was wonderful.

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14.

JONAS

I knew Roberto! I helped with his feeding the last time I was here, just a few weeks ago. He was a very interesting man.

LARISSA

Oh, yes. They told his whole life before they released him. They always do, but, to be honest, some of the tellings are a little boring. When they released Edna last week - Did you know Edna?

Jonas shakes his head and squeezes out his sponge.

LARISSA

They tried to make her life sound meaningful - and all lives are meaningful, of course - but Edna was a birthmother, my goodness. Then she worked in Food Production for years before coming here. She never even had a family unit. I don't think Edna was very smart.

Jonas snickers at Larissa's appraisal of Edna, as he rinses the soaps suds from her chest.

LARISSA

But Roberto's was wonderful. He had been an Instructor, on the planning committee. He even raised two wonderful children. Goodness, I don't know how he found the time.

JONAS

What happens when they make the actual release? Where did Roberto actually go?

LARISSA

Oh, I don't know. I don't think anybody does, except the committee. He just bowed to all of us and walked through the special door in the Releasing Room, like they all do. But you should have seen his look. Pure happiness.

JONAS

I wish I'd been there to see it.

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15.

Jonas steals another glance at Fiona.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - DAY

Jonas awakens from his slumber with a devilish smile plastered across his face.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - DAY

The family unit is still gathered around the table after their morning meal.

LILY

And then they caught me! And that's how it ended.

MOTHER

Thank you for your dream, Lily.

Mother looks to Father.

FATHER

I have no dream to report from last night. I don't remember dreaming. Gabe?

Father looks to the fidgeting newchild, jokingly expecting him to continue the family dream sharing. The whole unit laughs respectfully.

MOTHER

How about you, Jonas?

JONAS  
I did dream last night.

FATHER  
Good. Tell us.

Jonas shifts in his chair.

JONAS  
The details aren't clear, really.  
I think I was in the bathing room  
at the House of the Old.

INT. BATHING ROOM - DAY

The room is wrapped in an endless haze, filled with copious  
amounts of piping-hot steam.

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16.

FATHER (O.S.)  
That's where you were yesterday.

JONAS (O.S.)  
But it wasn't really the same.  
There was a tub in the dream, but  
only one.

The single tub is there, spilling over with water.

JONAS (O.S.)  
Everything was warm and damp. And  
I had taken off my tunic, but  
hadn't put on my smock, so my  
chest was bare.

Jonas, half-nude, approaches the tub.

JONAS (O.S.)  
I was perspiring, because it was  
so warm. And Fiona was there, the  
way she was yesterday.

Fiona appears, fully clothed. She laughs at Jonas.

MOTHER (O.S.)  
And Asher, too?

JONAS (O.S.)  
No. It was only me and Fiona,  
alone in the room. She was  
laughing, but I wasn't. I was  
almost a little angry at her in  
the dream, because it seemed like  
she wasn't taking me seriously.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - DAY

Mother and Father lean in to absorb Jonas' words.

LILY  
Serious about what?

Jonas struggles with the concept.

JONAS  
I think I was trying to convince  
her that she should get into the  
water. I wanted to take her  
clothes off and get into the tub.

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17.

MOTHER  
That's all?

JONAS  
I wanted to bathe her. I had the  
sponge in my hand. But she  
wouldn't. She kept laughing and  
saying no.

FATHER  
Can you describe the strongest  
feeling in your dream, son?

Jonas gathers his thoughts.

JONAS  
The wanting. I knew she wouldn't,  
and I knew that she shouldn't. But  
I wanted it so terribly.

MOTHER  
Thank you for your dream, Jonas.

Mother glances at Father.

FATHER  
Lily, it's time to leave for  
school. Would you walk beside me  
this morning and keep an eye on  
the newchild's basket? We want to  
be certain he doesn't wiggle  
himself loose.

Jonas collects his schoolbooks. Father and Lily scoop up  
Gabe in his basket and head out the front door.

MOTHER  
Wait, Jonas. I'll write an apology  
to your instructor so that you  
won't have to speak for being  
late.

Jonas retakes his seat, his face a mask of apprehension.

MOTHER  
Jonas, the feeling you described  
as the wanting? It was your first  
Stirrings. Father and I have been  
expecting it to happen to you for

some time. It happens to everyone.  
It happened to Father when he was  
your age, and it happened to me,  
too. It will happen to Lily one  
day. And very often. For the rest  
(MORE)

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18.

MOTHER (cont'd)  
of your life.

JONAS  
Do I have to report it?

Mother laughs lightly at Jonas' concern.

MOTHER  
You did. The dream-telling was  
enough.

JONAS  
Well, what happens? Am I going to  
have to go away for treatment  
right before the ceremony?

Mother reaches out to establish physical contact with her  
son.

MOTHER  
No, no, it's just the pills.  
You're ready for the pills, that's  
all. That's the treatment for  
Stirrings.

Mother flashes a reassuring smile for Jonas.

TIME CUT

A single pill from Mother's medicine bottle rests in Jonas'  
palm. It appears as a small, benign capsule. He inserts it  
into his orifice and swallows.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - LIVING AREA - DAY

Mother ties ceremonial ribbons around Lily's braids. Jonas  
adjusts his formal tunic in the background.

MOTHER  
Lily, hold still.

The little girl fidgets with the front buttons on her  
jacket.

LILY  
I don't like the ribbons. I'm glad  
I only have to wear them one more  
year. Then, next year, I get my  
bicycle, too.

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JONAS

There are good things each year,  
Lily. You start your volunteer  
hours after tonight's ceremony.

LILY

And this year, you get your  
Assignment. I hope you get Pilot,  
and that you take me flying!

Mother finishes the ribbon arrangement with a final tug.

MOTHER

Come on. I want to get a good seat  
in the Auditorium.

EXT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

Countless bicycles roll up to a never-ending row of  
bikeports outside the grand entry doors. Jonas rides his own  
bike, and Lily rides on Mother's back seat.

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

Asher and Jonas take their assigned seats in a balcony with  
their groupmates, the Elevens. Jonas scans the packed  
auditorium. Every citizen of the community is in attendance.

The lights dim over the seats and brighten around center  
stage. A line of Nururers, Jonas' father among them, march  
onto the stage with infants squirming in their arms.

SPEAKER (V.O.)

The Naming.

A new mother and father walk across the stage and accept a  
newchild from one of the Nururers.

SPEAKER (V.O.)

Female. Clementine.

Light applause. The new parents take their daughter  
Clementine off stage. The next parents in line are those of  
Fiona. She accompanies them across stage as they accept a  
baby boy.

SPEAKER (V.O.)

Male. Bruno.

Fiona's family unit exits the stage to the audience's  
robotic applause. The next parents in line also receive a  
boy.

SPEAKER (V.O.)

Male. Roberto.

TIME CUT

SPEAKER (V.O.)

The Eights.

The former seven-year-olds of the community, little Lily among them, march proudly across the stage and become Eights. They are issued brand-new jackets.

Fiona joins her groupmates in the balcony.

JONAS

New brother!

FIONA

He's cute, but I don't like his name very much. Bruno.

Fiona makes a face and smiles at Jonas.

SPEAKER (V.O.)

The Nines.

INT. AUDITORIUM - EATING HALL - DAY

A geometric hall filled with all the community's children. Jonas and Asher eat at a table across from each other.

ASHER

I heard about a guy who was absolutely certain he was going to be assigned Engineer, and instead they gave him Sanitation Laborer. The next day he jumped into the river, swam across, and joined the next community he came to. No one ever saw him again.

JONAS

Somebody made that story up, Ash. My father said he heard that story when he was a Twelve.

ASHER

I don't know, Jonas.

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21.

JONAS

Asher, have you ever once heard of anyone - and I mean for sure, not just some story - who joined another community?

ASHER

No. But you can. It says so in the rules. If you don't fit in, you just apply for Elsewhere and get released. My mother once threatened that she was going to

apply for release, because I was driving her crazy.

JONAS

She was joking.

ASHER

I know, but it was true what she was saying. Here today, gone tomorrow. She said anyone could really just apply for release. Never seen again.

SPEAKER (V.O.)

This is the conclusion of the meal break. Please return to the auditorium for the Ceremony of Twelve.

Immediately, the crowd in the eating hall obediently moves toward the exit doors.

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

Jonas and his groupmates file into the seats immediately before the stage. They are assigned in a specific order, placing Jonas and Fiona right next to each other and Asher one row ahead of them.

An older, regal-looking woman ascends the stage to address the masses. This is the community's CHIEF ELDER.

CHIEF ELDER

This is the time when we acknowledge differences. You Elevens have spent all your years till now learning to fit in, to standardize your behavior, to curb any impulse that might set you apart from the group. But today we honor your differences, for they

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22.

CHIEF ELDER (cont'd)

have determined your futures. This year's group is yet another gift to our community, and our Committee of Elders has done an excellent job of placing them all.

The audience applauds the Committee of Elders, an assembly of old bones perched together in their own dark balcony.

CHIEF ELDER

Let us begin. Number One. Madeline.

The first new Twelve in Jonas' group, MADELINE, steps nervously onto the stage.

CHIEF ELDER  
Fish Hatchery Attendant.

The crowd applauds her Assignment.

TIME CUT

CHIEF ELDER  
Number Four. Asher.

Asher clambers up the stage.

CHIEF ELDER  
Assistant Director of Recreation.

A MONTAGE OF TIME CUTS runs down the list of Twelves. Numbers accompanied by titles such as "Birthmother" and "Laborer" are spouted by the Chief Elder. Twelves return to their seats with new badges on their tunics and thick folders in their arms. END MONTAGE.

CHIEF ELDER  
Number Eighteen. Fiona.

Fiona ascends the stage.

CHIEF ELDER  
Caretaker of the Old.

Fiona accepts her badge and folder from the Chief Elder. Jonas nudges her as she returns to her seat beside him.

CHIEF ELDER  
Number Twenty.

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23.

The crowd is suddenly hushed. Jonas, in seat nineteen, rises an inch out of his chair, then quickly sets back down.

CHIEF ELDER (cont'd)  
Pierre.

The boy to Jonas' right, PIERRE, hesitates, then rises out of the seat marked twenty. His feet are heavy as he works his way up the stage. Groupmates around Jonas glance at him, then quickly avert their eyes. Jonas sinks down in his seat.

TIME CUT

CHIEF ELDER  
Number Twenty-three.

TIME CUT

CHIEF ELDER  
Number Twenty-seven.

TIME CUT

CHIEF ELDER  
Number Thirty.

TIME CUT

The Chief Elder hands the last boy, MARTIN, his folder, and pins a badge to his tunic.

CHIEF ELDER  
Martin, thank you for your  
childhood.

Soulless applause from the crowd. Murmurs zip through the auditorium.

CHIEF ELDER  
I know that you are all concerned.  
I have caused you anxiety. I  
apologize to my community.

COMMUNITY  
We accept your apology.

The tension in the crowd quells.

CHIEF ELDER  
Jonas, I apologize to you in  
particular. I caused you anguish.

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24.

JONAS  
I accept your apology.

CHIEF ELDER  
Please come to the stage now.

Jonas wills himself up the stage without the tame applause of his dumbstruck community. The Chief Elder places her arm reassuringly around his tense shoulders.

CHIEF ELDER  
Jonas has not been assigned. He  
has been selected.

The audience stirs, confused.

CHIEF ELDER  
Jonas has been selected to be our  
next Receiver of Memory.

One sharp, collective gasp pops from the crowd. They stare up at Jonas, mouths agape.

CHIEF ELDER  
Such a selection is very, very  
rare. Our community only has one  
Receiver, and it is he who trains  
his successor. We have had our  
current Receiver for a very long  
time.

Jonas' eyes dart up toward the dark balcony. Perched among the other Elders is one man who seems oddly separate. He is

ancient and bearded, with a pair of solemn, pale eyes that stare right into Jonas. He is THE GIVER.

CHIEF ELDER (cont'd)  
We failed in our last selection. It was ten years ago, when Jonas was just a toddler. But I will not dwell on the experience, because it causes us all terrible discomfort. We have not been hasty this time. We could not afford another failure. The Receiver-in-training cannot be observed, cannot be modified. That is stated quite clearly in the rules. He is to be alone, apart, while he is prepared by the current Receiver for the job which is most honored in our community. This selection was a unanimous choice of the Committee. Jonas was  
(MORE)

---

25.

CHIEF ELDER (cont'd)  
identified as a possible Receiver many years ago. We have observed him meticulously. There were no dreams of uncertainty.

The Chief Elder turns to Jonas.

CHIEF ELDER  
Jonas, the training required of you involves pain. Physical pain. You have never experienced that. Yes, you have scraped your knees falling off your bicycle. Yes, you crushed your finger in a door last year. But you will be faced now with pain of a magnitude that none of us here can comprehend, because it is beyond our experience. We cannot prepare you for that, but we feel certain that you are brave. Finally, the Receiver spoke of a quality, and it is one I can only name, but not describe. None of us here will understand it, but perhaps Jonas will. The Receiver told us that Jonas has a quality. The capacity to see beyond.

Jonas casts his pale eyes over the paralyzed audience. Shades of pink dance on their skin, but only in flashes, and only for a moment.

CHIEF ELDER  
Jonas, you will be trained to become our next Receiver of Memory. We thank you for your childhood.

The Chief Elder leaves the stage. The entire community rises to its feet, and chants:

COMMUNITY  
Jonas, Jonas, Jonas...

Now louder and faster:

COMMUNITY  
Jonas! Jonas! Jonas!

---

26.

EXT. AREA OF DWELLINGS - NIGHT

Jonas' family unit parks their bicycles outside their dwelling.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - NIGHT

The family unit is gathered around the table for dinner.

MOTHER  
You've been greatly honored,  
Jonas. Your father and I are very  
proud.

FATHER  
It's the most important job in the  
community.

JONAS  
But I thought you said the job of  
making Assignments was the most  
important.

MOTHER  
This is different. It's not a job,  
really. I never thought - Never  
expected... There's only been one  
Receiver in my lifetime.

JONAS  
But the Chief Elder said that they  
had made a selection before, and  
that it failed. What was she  
talking about?

Mother and Father shift uncomfortably in their seats.

MOTHER  
That's right. It happened very  
much as it happened today. One of  
the Elevens --

JONAS  
What was his name?

MOTHER

Her name. Not his, it was a female. But we are never to speak the name, or use it again for a newchild.

---

27.

JONAS

What happened to her?

MOTHER

We don't know. We never saw her again.

The family continues eating their rudimentary paste.

FATHER

You've been greatly honored, Jonas. Greatly honored.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Jonas sits at his desk and considers the cover of the folder he was given at the auditorium. He cracks it open.

INT. FIONA'S SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Fiona sits at her desk, buried beneath a thick packet of papers in her Assignment folder.

INT. ASHER'S SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Asher is slumped across his bed, flipping through a heavy stack of printed pages.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

As Jonas opens his folder, a single sheet of paper floats out and lands on his desk. It reads:

THE GIVER (V.O.)

One: Go immediately at the end of school hours each day to the Annex entrance behind the House of the Old and present yourself to the attendant. Two: Go immediately to your dwelling at the end of Training Hours each day. Three: From this moment you are exempted from rules governing rudeness. You may ask any question of any citizen and you will receive answers. Four: Do not discuss your training with any other member of the community, including parents and Elders. Five: From this moment

you are prohibited from  
(MORE)

---

28.

THE GIVER (cont'd)  
dream-telling. Six: Except for  
illness or injury unrelated to  
your training, do not apply for  
any medication. Seven: You are not  
permitted to apply for release.  
Eight: You may lie.

Jonas, stunned, reads it again.

INT. FATHER & MOTHER'S SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Mother swallows her pill for the Stirrings.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Father twists open a bottle and ingests his nightly pill.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Jonas washes down his pill with water.

EXT. THE HOUSE OF THE OLD - DAY

Jonas and Fiona stroll up to the entrance, carrying their  
folders.

FIONA

I go in here, Jonas. I don't know  
why I'm so nervous, I've been here  
so often before.

Fiona gives Jonas a radiant smile.

JONAS

I understand. Everything is so  
different now.

FIONA

Yes. Well, I don't want to be  
late. If we finish at the same  
time, I'll ride home with you?

JONAS

Of course.

---

29.

EXT. ANNEX - DAY

Jonas punches a buzzer on the door. A voice emanates from a  
speaker on the building:

VOICE FROM SPEAKER (V.O.)

Yes?

JONAS

It's, uh, Jonas. I'm the new - I mean --

VOICE FROM SPEAKER (V.O.)

Come in.

The heavy door clicks open.

INT. ANNEX LOBBY - DAY

Jonas walks up to a female ATTENDANT behind a desk. As soon as she sees Jonas, she respectfully rises to her feet.

ATTENDANT

Welcome, Receiver of Memory.

JONAS

Oh, please. Call me Jonas.

The attendant smiles at Jonas, then presses a button at her desk that triggers a door down the hall to unlock with a loud CLICK.

ATTENDANT

You may go right on in.

Jonas looks at her, shocked.

ATTENDANT

The locks are simply to ensure the Receiver's privacy. It would be difficult if citizens wandered in, looking for the Department of Bicycle Repair, or something.

Jonas laughs, relaxing a little.

ATTENDANT

There is nothing dangerous here, but he doesn't like to be kept waiting.

Jonas hurries down the hall and through the unlocked door.

---

30.

INT. THE GIVER'S ROOM - DAY

Jonas enters the room and freezes in his tracks. The standard desk, table, and bed are present, but their craftsmanship is strikingly more ornate than the norm.

Thick, luxurious fabrics cover the furniture; the bed frame is decorated oak; all four walls are bookcases, packed from ceiling to floor with countless volumes.

Jonas quickly snaps out of his stare, as he notices the Giver watching him from his seat across the room. Jonas steps toward him and bows slightly.

JONAS

I'm Jonas.

THE GIVER

I know. Welcome, Receiver of Memory.

Jonas stares at the Giver's pale eyes for a BEAT.

JONAS

Sir, I apologize for my lack of understanding . . .

The Giver remains silent, still . . .

JONAS

. . . But I thought - I mean I think that you are the Receiver of Memory. I'm only, well, I was only assigned, I mean selected, yesterday. I'm not anything at all. Not yet.

The Giver collects his thoughts.

THE GIVER

Beginning today, this moment, at least to me, you are the Receiver. I have been the Receiver for a very long time. A very long time. You can see that can't you?

JONAS

I can see that you are very old.

The Giver smiles and strokes his beard.

THE GIVER

I am not, actually, as old as I look. This job has aged me. I know I look as if I should be scheduled for release very soon, but I actually have a good deal of time left. I was pleased, though, when you were selected. It took them a long time. The failure of the previous selection was ten years ago, and my energy is starting to diminish. I need what strength I have remaining for your training. We have painful work to do, you and I. Please sit down.

Jonas lowers himself onto the elegant cushioning of a nearby chair. The Giver holds his tired eyes closed, then abruptly snaps them open.

THE GIVER

You may ask questions. I have so little experience in describing this process. It is forbidden to talk of it. I may neglect to make things as clear as I should, so feel free to ask me anything that may help you.

Jonas searches his mind, then shrugs his shoulders.

THE GIVER

Simply stated, although it's not really simple at all, my job is to transmit to you all the memories I have within me --

JONAS

-- Sir, I would be very interested to hear the story of your life and to listen to your memories. I apologize for interrupting.

THE GIVER

No apologies in this room. We haven't time.

JONAS

Well, I am interested, I don't mean that I'm not, but I don't exactly understand why it's so important. I could do some adult job in the community, and in my recreation time I could come and  
(MORE)

---

32.

JONAS (cont'd)

listen to the stories from your childhood. I'd like that. Actually, I al--

THE GIVER

-- No, no, no. I'm not being clear. It's not my past that I must transmit to you. It's the memories of the whole world, Jonas. Before you, before me, before the previous Receiver, and generations before him.

Jonas takes a second to think before he responds.

JONAS

I - I don't understand. I'm sorry, sir. Do you mean not just the community? Do you mean Elsewhere, too? I'm sorry, maybe

I'm not smart enough. I don't know what you mean when you say those things. I thought there was only us. I thought there was only now.

THE GIVER

There's much more. There's all that goes beyond - all that is Elsewhere - and all that goes back, and back, and back. I received all of those when I was selected, and here in this room, all alone, I re-experience them again and again. It is how wisdom comes. And how we shape our future. I am so weighted with them.

The Giver pauses to rest. Jonas looks at him with genuine concern.

THE GIVER

It's as if . . . It's like going downhill through snow on a sled. At first it's exhilarating: the speed; the sharp, clear air; but then the snow accumulates, builds up on the runners, and you slow, you have to push hard to keep going, and . . .

---

33.

The Giver shakes his head and scans Jonas.

THE GIVER

That meant nothing to you, did it?

JONAS

I didn't understand it, sir.

THE GIVER

Of course you didn't. You don't know what snow is, do you?

Jonas shakes his head.

THE GIVER

Or a sled? Runners?

JONAS

No, sir.

THE GIVER

Really? The terms mean nothing to you? Not even . . .

JONAS

. . . Nothing, sir.

THE GIVER

Well, it's a place to start. I'd  
been wondering how to begin. Move  
to the bed, and lie face down.  
Remove your tunic first.

Jonas rises from his seat, removes his tunic, and places  
himself face down on the Giver's bed.

The Giver moves to a speaker-box on the wall and deftly  
switches it OFF. He stations himself in a seat beside  
Jonas.

THE GIVER

Close your eyes. Relax. This  
will not be painful.

JONAS

What are you going to do, sir?

THE GIVER

I am going to transmit the memory  
of snow.

---

34.

The Giver places his hands firmly on Jonas' bare back. After  
a anxious moment, Jonas begins to SHIVER and his teeth begin  
to CHATTER.

EXT. SNOWY HILL - NIGHT

Jonas, eyes closed, sits atop a sled on the peak of a  
towering mound of powdery snow. He sticks out his tongue  
and smiles as he catches the gentle snowflakes drifting down  
from the black sky.

Jonas reaches down and picks up the sled's damp rope, as the  
swirling crystals accumulate on his body.

He snaps his eyes open, and the sled tips forward and begins  
racing down the hill.

The runners cut rapidly through the frost, jetting Jonas  
downward, faster and faster. The young boy smiles in  
ecstasy, as the wind whips wildly against his face.

As Jonas reaches the bottom of the hill and the incline  
disappears, snow accumulates beneath the runners, and the  
sled comes to a slow stop.

Jonas thrusts his body forward on the sled, trying to force  
the ride to commence.

BACK TO THE GIVER'S ROOM

The Giver pulls his hands from the boy's back, and Jonas'  
eyes flutter open.

THE GIVER

How do you feel?

JONAS

Surprised.

Jonas sits up on the bed.

THE GIVER

It was exhausting. But you know, even transmitting that tiny memory to you . . . I think it lightened me just a little.

JONAS

Do you mean - Did you say I could ask questions?

The Giver nods enthusiastically.

---

35.

JONAS

Do you mean that now you no longer have that memory?

THE GIVER

That's right. A little weight off this old body.

JONAS

But it was such fun! And I took it from you!

THE GIVER

All I gave you was one ride, on one sled, in one snow, on one hill. I have a whole world of them in my memory. I could give them to you one by one, a thousand times, and there would still be more.

JONAS

Are you saying that I - I mean that we could do it again? I'd really like to. I think I could steer by pulling the rope. I didn't know to try this time.

THE GIVER

Maybe another day, for a treat. But there's no time, really, just to play. I only wanted to begin by showing you how it works. Now, lie back down. I want--

-- Jonas hops belly-first onto the bed.

JONAS

Why don't we have snow, and sleds, and hills? And when did we, in the past? Did my parents have

sleds when they were young? Did you?

THE GIVER

No. It's a very distant memory. That's why it was so exhausting. I had to tug it forward from many generations back.

JONAS

But what happened to those things? The snow and the rest of it?

---

36.

THE GIVER

Climate Control. Snow made growing food difficult, limited the agricultural periods. And unpredictable weather made transportation impossible at times. It wasn't a practical thing, so it became obsolete when we went to Sameness. The hills made conveyance of goods unwieldy, and so . . . Sameness.

JONAS

I wish we had those things, still. Just now and then.

THE GIVER

So do I. But that choice is not ours.

JONAS

But, sir, since you have so much power--

THE GIVER

-- Honor. I have great honor, and one day so will you. That's not the same as power. Lie quietly now. Let me give you something else. And this time I'm not going to tell you the name of it, because I want to test the receiving. I gave away snow and sled the first time, but you should be able to perceive the name without being told a word.

The Giver places his hands on the boy's back.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Jonas, outstretched on the sand, soaks up the sunshine. He smiles at the warmth. Then, as the bright rays beat down on his body, he winces and touches his skin.

JONAS

Ouch!

BACK TO THE GIVER'S ROOM

Jonas sits up, wincing in discomfort. He touches the skin on his neck.

---

37.

JONAS

It's - it's a sunburn. It hurts a lot.

THE GIVER

I started you out with pleasure. My previous failure gave me the wisdom to do that. You must understand . . . It will be painful, Jonas.

JONAS

I understand.

THE GIVER

Get up, now. You may return home; that's enough for the first day. You were in the memories longer than you realize. We'll do much longer sessions in the future.

Jonas gets off the bed and puts his tunic back on.

JONAS

Goodbye, sir. Thank you for my first day.

The Giver nods. Jonas moves to leave, but then:

JONAS

Sir?

THE GIVER

Do you have a question?

JONAS

It's just that I don't know your name. You say now I'm the Receiver, so I don't know what to call you.

The old man shifts his aching shoulders around in his plush chair.

THE GIVER

Call me The Giver.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Jonas lies asleep in bed, bundled beneath his blanket, with a satisfied smile on his face.

EXT. SNOWY HILL - NIGHT

On the sled, Jonas zips down the hill.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - DAY

The family unit is having their morning meal together.

MOTHER

. . . And you slept soundly,  
Jonas? No dreams?

Jonas smiles to himself.

JONAS

I slept very soundly.

FATHER

Well, I wish this one would.

Father points to Gabriel, who is situated in his basket on the floor, COOING at and playing with his stuffed hippo.

MOTHER

So do I. He's been so fretful at  
night.

The newchild giggles at his stuffed animal, then sneezes adorably.

EXT. THE HOUSE OF THE OLD - DAY

Jonas and Fiona pedal up to the building together.

FIONA

I looked for you yesterday, so we  
could ride home together. Your  
bike was still there, and I waited  
for a little while. But it was  
getting late, so I went on home.

JONAS

I apologize for making you wait.

FIONA

I accept your apology.

JONAS

I stayed a little longer than I  
expected.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE. They pedal onward.

JONAS

You've been doing so many  
volunteer hours with the Old.  
There won't be much that you don't  
already know.

FIONA

Oh, there's lots to learn. There's  
administrative work, dietary  
rules, punishment for disobedience  
- did you know they use the same  
discipline wand on the Old, the  
same as for small children? And  
there's occupational therapy, and  
medications, and . . . I think I  
like it a lot better than school.

JONAS

Me, too.

They hit their brakes as they reach the designated bike  
ports.

Jonas and Fiona stare at each other for an awkward BEAT,  
then:

FIONA

Goodbye.

They wave goodbye. Fiona spins away from Jonas and hurries  
through the building's front entrance.

As she turns away, in her haste, her long locks of hair flip  
up into the air before falling back around her shoulders. In  
mid-air, the strands of Fiona's hair adopt a PASSIONATE RED  
HUE. But only for a second.

She disappears behind the entrance, and a bewildered Jonas  
moves on.

INT. THE GIVER'S ROOM - DAY

Jonas enters the room. The Giver smiles at him.

THE GIVER

Welcome. We must get started.  
You're one minute late.

JONAS

I apologi--

---

40.

Jonas cuts himself off, then removes his tunic and moves to  
the bed.

JONAS

I'm one minute late, because  
something happened. And I'd like  
to ask you about it, if you don't  
mind.

THE GIVER

You may ask me anything.

JONAS

I think it's what you call "seeing beyond."

THE GIVER

Describe it.

JONAS

Just now, outside, it happened with my friend Fiona. Not her, just something about her. I think her hair . . . it was different. Not the shape or - or in length. I don't know. I-I - It just --

Jonas pauses in frustration.

JONAS

It changed. I don't know how.

THE GIVER

When I gave you the memory yesterday, the first one, did you look around? Did you look at the sled?

JONAS

Ye-- No. I felt it under me.

The Giver ponders.

THE GIVER

Lie down.

Jonas does so and shuts his eyes tight.

---

41.

THE GIVER

Call back the memory of the ride on the hill, just the beginning of it. And this time, look down at the sled.

Jonas opens his eyes.

JONAS

Excuse me, but don't you have to place your hands on my back?

THE GIVER

It's your memory now. It's no longer mine to give.

JONAS

How do I call it?

THE GIVER

Well, you can remember last year,  
or the year you were a Seven or  
Five, can't you?

JONAS

Of course.

THE GIVER

It's much the same. Just  
concentrate.

Jonas shuts his eyes again.

EXT. SNOWY HILL - NIGHT

Jonas sits on the sled atop the hill. A world of snowflakes  
swirl about him.

He blows his steamy breathe into the air and watches it  
float away with childlike delight.

Then, he looks down at the sled. The wood of the structure  
is painted CRIMSON, the same distinct shade as the apple and  
Fiona's hair.

Jonas blinks at it, and the color does not waver; it simply  
is. It is a red sled.

BACK TO THE GIVER'S ROOM

Jonas sits up on the bed. The Giver watches him curiously.

---

42.

JONAS

I saw it. In the sled.

THE GIVER

You're beginning to see the color  
red.

Jonas stares at the old man, dumbfounded.

THE GIVER

Uh, back before the time of  
Sameness, back in the time of  
memories, everything had a shape  
and size, the way they still do,  
but they also had another quality  
called color. There were many  
colors, and one of them was called  
red. That's the one you're  
starting to see. Your friend  
Fiona has red hair - quite  
distinctive, actually. I've  
noticed it before myself.

JONAS

At the Ceremony, I saw it happen  
in the faces of the audience.

THE GIVER

Yes - well no. Flesh isn't red, but it has red tones in it. There was a time, actually - you'll see in the memories later - when flesh was many different colors. That was before we went to Sameness. The faces you saw, I'm sure, weren't as deep or vibrant as your friend's hair. We've never completely mastered Sameness. I suppose the genetic scientists are still working out the kinks. Hair like Fiona's must drive them crazy.

JONAS

The color on the sled, Giver, it didn't change. It just was!

THE GIVER

That's because it was a memory from when color just was.

---

43.

JONAS

It was so . . . Giver, the red was so beautiful! Do you see it all the time?

THE GIVER

All of them. I see all of them. You will when you receive my memories. You'll gain wisdom, then the colors. And so much more.

JONAS

Why can't everyone see them?

THE GIVER

Our people made that choice to go to Sameness. Before my time, before the previous time, and back, and back, and back. We relinquished color when we relinquished sunshine and did away with differences. We gained control of many things, but we had to do away with others.

JONAS

We shouldn't have!

The Giver is startled by Jonas' outburst.

THE GIVER

You've come very quickly to that conclusion. It took me many

years. Lie back down, now. We  
have so much to do.

Jonas obliges.

THE GIVER  
Close your eyes and be still, now.  
I'm going to give you a memory of  
a rainbow.

BEGIN MONTAGE

EXT. BLACK VOID

Infinite darkness. A single shaft of light shoots across  
the frame. Then another, and another. COLORS fill the  
shafts. The entire frame becomes populated by a rainbow of  
heavenly hues.

---

44.

INT. THE GIVER'S ROOM - DAY

JONAS  
But it's all the same, always! I  
mean I know it's not important if  
you put on a red tunic or a blue  
one, but . . .

THE GIVER  
It's the freedom that's important,  
isn't it?

JONAS  
Yes. Exactly.

THE GIVER  
Well, consider this: what if you  
chose wrong with something that is  
important in the community?

Jonas calms down.

JONAS  
Like if we allowed people to  
choose their own mate? That  
wouldn't be safe.

THE GIVER  
Why not? Not safe?

JONAS  
It's . . . Oh, I see. It doesn't  
matter when it's a child choosing  
between certain toys, but we can't  
let people choose their own  
spouses or jobs. What if they  
choose wrong?

THE GIVER  
Frightening?

JONAS

I suppose. They would be stuck in those positions. I suppose we have to protect people from wrong choices.

THE GIVER

It's safer?

JONAS

Yes. Much safer.

---

45.

THE GIVER

Very well, then.

TIME CUT

The Giver places his hands on Jonas' back.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN AFRICA - DAY

Jonas is in a land of sparse grass and rocks. The CRACK of a FIRING RIFLE resounds. Jonas catches the glimpse of a massive elephant CRASHING to the ground.

A group of POACHERS, some of them with DARK BROWN SKIN, emerge from the shrubbery. They approach the fallen giant and begin hacking at its tusks with sharpened machetes.

Jets of STARTLINGLY RED BLOOD blanket the surrounding terrain.

The men take the tusks and speed off in an off-road vehicle. Another elephant emerges from some thick vegetation and covers the body of its comrade with a bundle of branches. The grieving animal ROARS into the empty landscape.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - LIVING AREA - DAY

Jonas watches Lily play with her comfort object: a stuffed elephant.

JONAS

Lily, did you know that once there really were elephants? Live ones?

Lily rolls her eys.

LILY

Right. Sure, Jonas.

THE GIVER'S ROOM

Jonas enters the room, only to find the Giver hunched over on his knees, writhing in pain.

THE GIVER

Come back tomorrow. I'm in great pain today.

Jonas leaves.

---

46.

BLACK VOID

LIGHTNING CRACKS violently across the frame.

EXT. CENTRAL PLAZA - DAY

Jonas and Asher walk along a landscaped lawn with a bush of BRIGHT RED roses. Jonas stops Asher and presses his hands against his back.

JONAS

Look . . .

Jonas stares at the roses. Asher looks around, puzzled, then steps away from Jonas' hands.

ASHER

What's the matter?

JONAS

No, nothing. I thought for a minute that they were wilting, and we should let the Gardening Crew know they needed more watering.

THE GIVER'S ROOM

The Giver places his hands on Jonas' back.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

FAMILY and FRIENDS are gathered around a YOUNG BOY sitting at a table. A chocolate cake with thick frosting, bearing a name and nine candles, is the centerpiece.

Everyone SINGS a song directed toward the child.

Jonas watches from the back of the room.

THE GIVER'S ROOM

Some of the books lining the walls are now in FULL COLOR.

JONAS

Do you advise the Committee of Elders often?

THE GIVER

Rarely. Not nearly as often as I should. There are so many things I could tell them, but they don't

want to change. I wish they did.  
(MORE)

---

47.

THE GIVER (cont'd)  
Life here is just so painless.  
It's what they've chosen.

JONAS  
I don't see why they even need a  
Receiver, then.

THE GIVER  
They need me. And you. They were  
reminded of that ten years ago,  
with the failure of my successor.

JONAS  
Why did that remind them?

THE GIVER  
When the new Receiver failed, the  
memories that she had received  
were released. They went . . .

The Giver waves his hand airily.

THE GIVER  
I don't know exactly. They didn't  
return to me. They went out to  
the community; everyone had access  
to the memories. It was chaos.  
They suffered until it subsided as  
the memories assimilated, but it  
reminded them just how much they  
needed me to contain all that  
pain. And knowledge.

JONAS  
But you have to suffer like that  
all the time.

The Giver nods.

THE GIVER  
As will you.

TIME CUT

The Giver places his hands on Jonas' back.

EXT. LUSH FIELD - DAY

An unreal swarm of BUTTERFLIES swirl around Jonas' body,  
then float off down a slope of tall grass.

---

48.

THE GIVER'S ROOM

JONAS  
My Instructors in science and  
technology have taught us about  
the--

The Giver cuts him off with a bitter tone:

THE GIVER  
-- They know nothing.

Jonas, stunned, nervously looks over to the speaker-box on  
the wall. It has been switched "OFF."

THE GIVER  
Nothing.

TIME CUT

The Giver places his hands on Jonas' back.

EXT. RANCH - DAY

Jonas rides a grand, gleaming stallion at top speed.

EXT. RUNNING STREAM - DAY

The horse drinks from the cold stream, then affectionately  
nudges Jonas' shoulder with its head.

THE GIVER'S ROOM

The Giver places his hands on Jonas' back.

EXT. KILAUEA - DAY

The grand volcano TREMBLES and ERUPTS with overwhelming  
ferocity, spurting glowing RED magma, and a wealth of  
knowledge, from its mighty head.

END MONTAGE

THE GIVER'S ROOM

JONAS  
Giver, what causes you pain?

The Giver remains silent. Jonas continues:

JONAS  
The Chief Elder told me the  
memories would bring me great  
pain. I haven't suffered. I  
remember the sunburn, but it  
wasn't so terrible. I have to see  
you suffer. Maybe if you gave  
some to me, your pain would be  
less.

THE GIVER

Lie down.

Jonas removes his tunic and follows the order.

THE GIVER

All right. We'll start with something familiar. Let's go once again to a hill, and a sled.

The Giver places his hands on Jonas' back.

EXT. ANOTHER SNOWY HILL - NIGHT

This hill is steep, and the snowfall hard and jagged.

The sled, Jonas atop it, slides forward and tips off the apex of the hill. The runners SCRAPE the ice as it drops downward, picking up acceleration.

The sled slips and Jonas loses control. A bump on the hill launches his body one way, and the sled another. Jonas flies through space and lands on a patch of unforgiving ice.

The unmistakable CRACK of bone ECHOES across the tundra.

Jonas lay still, his faced smashed into the blue. He GASPS ALOUD, then turns his head and vomits onto the cold canvas. He SCREAMS, then begins SOBBING.

Steam rises from both the patch of bubbling vomit, and the gaping hole in his leg.

BACK TO THE GIVER'S ROOM

Jonas sits up, his face wet with tears. He rubs his unbroken leg.

JONAS

May I have a relief-of-pain pill, please?

---

50.

The Giver shakes his head apologetically.

THE GIVER

I'm sorry.

Jonas hangs his head and grimaces in pain.

JONAS

Why? Why do you and I have to hold these memories?

THE GIVER

It gives us wisdom. Without wisdom I could not fulfill my function of advising the Committee of Elders when they call upon me.

JONAS

But what wisdom do you get from pain?

The Giver sighs and collects his thoughts.

THE GIVER

Some time ago, before your birth, a lot of citizens petitioned the Committee of Elders. They wanted to increase birth rates. They wanted each Birthmother to be assigned an extra birth, so that the population would increase and there would be more Laborers available.

JONAS

That makes sense.

THE GIVER

The idea was that certain family units could accommodate an additional child.

JONAS

Mine could. We have Gabriel this year, and it's fun, having a third child.

THE GIVER

The Committee of Elders sought my advice. It made sense to them, too, but it was a new idea, and they came to me for wisdom.

---

51.

JONAS

And you used your memories.

THE GIVER

And the strongest memory that came back to me was hunger. It came from many generations back. Centuries back. The population had gotten so big that hunger was everywhere. Excruciating hunger and starvation. It was followed by warfare.

JONAS

So you described that to them?

THE GIVER

They don't want to hear about pain. They just seek the advice. I simply advised them against increasing the population.

Jonas holds his leg.

JONAS

What does the word "warfare" mean?

THE GIVER

You'll learn soon enough. But it means destruction, I suppose.

JONAS

Destruction? Why - But why can't everyone hold a little bit of the pain? If we all shared the memories, wouldn't the pain be less?

THE GIVER

Yes. But then everyone would be burdened and pained, and that's not what they want. It's not what they've chosen. We carry the burden for our community. It's the real reason you and I are so honored.

EXT. AREA OF DWELLINGS - DAY

Jonas limps homeward, pushing his bike along the path at his side.

---

52.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

The family unit is gathered around baby Gabriel. Jonas sits at the desk, studying.

FATHER

After all this extra time I've put in with him, I hope they don't release him.

MOTHER

Maybe it would be for the best. I know you don't mind getting up with him, but the lack of sleep is awfully hard for me.

Lily waves Gabriel's stuffed hippo for him to see.

LILY

If they release Gabe, could we get another newchild as a visitor?

FATHER

No, Lily-billy, it's very rare that it happens, anyway. It probably won't happen again for a long time. Anyway, Gabriel's release won't be discussed anytime

soon. We're preparing for a  
Birthmother who's expecting twins.

MOTHER

Oh, dear. If they're identical, I  
hope you're not assigned.

FATHER

I am. I'm next on the list. It's  
not a difficult decision, though.  
I'll just look at the birthweight,  
and simply release the smaller of  
the two.

Jonas looks up from the desk.

JONAS

Mother? Father? Why don't we  
just put Gabriel's crib in my room  
tonight? I know how to care for  
him. It would let the two of you  
get some sleep.

---

53.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Jonas sleeps soundly in his bed. Gabriel, in his crib,  
begins fidgeting beneath his covers. The newchild starts to  
WHIMPER.

Jonas wakes up and attends to Gabe. He places his hand on  
the boy's back and begins patting him rhythmically. Still  
patting the child back to sleep, Jonas shuts his tired eyes.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

A gentle wind carries a sailboat across clear turquoise  
water. Jonas rides in the boat, the brisk air combing  
through his hair.

Suddenly, his smile disappears as the water becomes murky,  
the boat slows, and the sky above him dims.

BACK TO JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM

Jonas rips his hand from Gabriel's back and leaps toward his  
bed, frightened. The baby is suddenly calm, completely  
peaceful, staring off into space with his PALE EYES.

BACK TO THE LAKE

The scene is just as vivid as it once was with Gabriel  
sailing in the boat, GIGGLING MERRILY.

BACK TO JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM

Jonas sits still in the dark. Gabriel falls back to sleep.

INT. THE GIVER'S ROOM - DAY

Jonas enters and immediately sees the Giver hunched in his chair, wincing in pain.

JONAS  
I'll come back tomorrow, sir.

Jonas turns to leave. The Giver GASPS in agony:

THE GIVER  
Please . . .

Jonas turns back. The Giver's face is contorted by the suffering.

---

54.

THE GIVER  
. . . take some of the pain.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

All around Jonas, fallen SOLDIERS lay either dead or near death. SOUNDS OF FIREARMS BOOM in the distance.

A wild horse charges across the expanse, WHINNYING in panic, before it crashes to the dirt and does not rise again.

SOLDIER (O.C.)  
Water . . .

Jonas looks over and sees a soldier not much older than himself. The boy soldier is bloody and beaten. The colors of carnage are disturbingly BRIGHT on his person: CRIMSON on the boy's chest; shreds of GREEN grass in his YELLOW hair.

Jonas now notices that his own body is outstretched across the blood-soaked earth. He is wearing a gray uniform, the same as the yellow-haired soldier's, and a splintered bone is protruding through the skin on his elbow.

SOLDIER  
Water . . .

As the boy pleads again, a fresh spurt of RED is ejected from his mouth.

Jonas reaches with his unwounded arm for the metal container on his hip. He manages to unscrew the cap with his teeth, and bring it to his comrade's lips. Jonas pours water into the soldier's mouth, down his grimy chin.

THE THUD OF CANNONS BANG in the distance. VOICES OF MEN CRY OUT. Wounded horses, on their backs, stab randomly at the air with their hooves.

The young soldier next to Jonas closes his eyes and dies.

BACK TO THE GIVER'S ROOM

The Giver pulls his hands from Jonas' back and turns away in shame.

THE GIVER  
Forgive me.

---

55.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - LIVING AREA - DAY

The family unit stirs about, getting set to leave the dwelling and begin their days.

SPEAKER (V.O.)  
Today is declared an unscheduled holiday.

They all stop in their tracks and turn to the speaker-box from which the message came.

FATHER  
Well, alright!

Jonas drops his folders back on the desk. They all smile in excitement.

EXT. THE BRIDGE - DAY

Jonas speeds over the cobblestone bridge.

EXT. PLAYING FIELD - DAY

A large group of CHILDREN of various ages frolic through the sizable plot of grass and trees, LAUGHING and SCREAMING with delight.

Jonas rides up to the field and tosses his bike alongside one of the many other bicycles strewn about the area. He spots Asher playing with the other children.

JONAS  
(calling out)  
Asher! Hey, Ash!

Too busy with his game to hear his friend, Asher ducks behind a bush. Jonas steps onto the field and one of the children leaps in front of him, holding his hand in the shape of a gun.

CHILD  
Bang! Bang! Bang!

Another child streaks by and pretends to shoot the kid who shot at Jonas.

OTHER CHILD  
Psssheewww!

---

The first child dramatically grabs his chest and collapses to the ground. Jonas watches uneasily.

CHILD

You got me!

Suddenly, Asher leaps from behind a tree and shoots Jonas with his fingers.

ASHER

Blam! You're in my line of  
ambush, Jonas! Blam, blam!

Jonas steps back as Asher charges by him. Another group of children appear at the other end of the playing field. Jonas notices that Fiona is one of them.

FIONA

Attack!

Asher and the others on this side of the field hold their imaginary firearms poised.

ASHER

Couter-attack!

The two groups of players converge in the center of the field and exchange explosion sound effects and hand gestures. Before long, most of the children throw themselves on the grass, shot.

Jonas' complexion takes on a sallow tone. He virtually sleepwalks toward the action on the field.

ASHER

Pow! You're hit, Jonas! Pow!  
You're hit again!

Jonas doesn't throw himself down. The numerous "hit" children on the ground look up at him quizzically. The few still firing stop and watch.

Jonas' breathing SHUDDERS. He struggles to fight back the tears. The children look at each other nervously, before awkwardly walking away to another game.

They leave until only Asher and Fiona remain staring perplexed at Jonas' paralyzed body.

FIONA

What's wrong, Jonas? It's only a  
game.

ASHER

You ruined it.

JONAS

Don't play it anymore.

ASHER

I'm the one who's training for  
Assistant Recreation Director.  
Games aren't your area of  
expertness.

JONAS

Expertise.

ASHER

You can't say what we play, even  
if you are going to be the new  
Receiver.

BEAT.

ASHER

I apologize for not paying you the  
respect you deserve.

JONAS

Asher, you had no way of knowing  
this, but it's a cruel game. In  
the past--

ASHER

-- I said I apologize, Jonas.

JONAS

I accept your apology.

FIONA

Do you want to go for a ride along  
the river, Jonas?

Jonas looks at his gentle female friend. Her blazing red  
hair makes her appear lovelier than ever.

JONAS

No. I-I'm sorry, no, I . . .

Fiona nods along, hiding her surprise. She goes off with  
Asher, and they find their bicycles and take off together.

Jonas hangs his head.

---

58.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - NIGHT

The family unit is gathered around the table for the evening  
meal.

LILY

I can't wait till the ceremonies  
in a few months, so I can finally  
become a Nine and get my very own  
bicycle. Father's is too big for  
me. I fell. Good thing Gabe

wasn't in the - wasn't in the  
child seat!

MOTHER

A very good thing.

Little Gabe walks freely around the table with his newly  
developing legs. He giggles at the mention of his name.

GABRIEL

Gay! Gay!

It's how the child pronounces his own name, and it brings a  
small smile to Jonas' weary face.

FATHER

Well, I want to get to sleep  
early. Tomorrow's a busy day for  
me. The twins are being born in a  
few days, and early test results  
are showing that they're  
identical. I have to get up  
early, and go confirm what we  
believe in the morning.

LILY

One for here, one for Elsewhere.

JONAS

Do you actually take it Elsewhere,  
Father?

FATHER

No, I just have to make the  
selection. I weigh them, hand the  
larger one over to a Nurturer  
who's standing by, waiting, and  
then I get the smaller one all  
cleaned up and comfortable. Then  
I perform a small Ceremony of  
Release.

---

59.

Father looks down at Gabriel.

FATHER (cont'd)

(baby voice)

Then I wave bye-bye!

Father waves at Gabe, who raises his chubby little hand and  
returns the gesture.

GABRIEL

Bye-bye!

JONAS

And somebody else comes to get  
him? Somebody from Elsewhere?

FATHER

That's right.

LILY

What if they give the little twin a name Elsewhere, a name like, oh, maybe Jonathan? And here, in our community, at his naming, the twin that we kept is given the name Jonathan, and then there would be two children with the same name, and they would look exactly the same, and someday, maybe when they were a Six, a group of Sixes would go to visit another community on a bus, and there in the other community, in the other group of Sixes, would be a Jonathan who was exactly the same as the other Jonathan, and then maybe they would get mixed up and take the wrong Jonathan home, and maybe his parents wouldn't notice.

Lily pauses to catch her breath.

MOTHER

Lily, I have a wonderful idea. Maybe when you become a Twelve, they'll give you the Assignment of Storyteller! I don't think we've had a Storyteller in the community for a long time.

LILY

I have a better idea for one more story. What if actually we were all twins and didn't know it, and  
(MORE)

---

60.

LILY (cont'd)

so Elsewhere there would be another Lily, and another Jonas, and another Mother and Father, and another Chief Elder --

FATHER

-- Lily. I think it's bedtime.

INT. THE GIVER'S ROOM - DAY

Jonas and the Giver sit across from each other.

THE GIVER

There are so many good memories.

JONAS

What's your favorite? You don't have to give it away yet. Just describe it, so I can look forward to it.

The Giver smiles.

THE GIVER

Lie down. I'm happy to give it to you.

Jonas obeys his mentor. The Giver places his hands on the boy's bare back.

INT. WARM HOME - DAY

A room filled with a FAMILY. A firelight glows on a hearth. It is visible, through a window, that it is snowing outside.

Colored lights, GREEN and RED, sparkle around a pine tree surrounded by wrapped packages.

A pair of children begin passing the packages around to a pair of adults, who are obviously parents, and also a much older couple, man and woman.

They all begin unwrapping the packages.

BACK TO THE GIVER'S ROOM

THE GIVER

What did you perceive?

Jonas sits up on the bed.

---

61.

JONAS

Warmth. And . . . family. I-It was some celebration, a holiday. Who were the old people? Why were they there?

THE GIVER

They were called Grandparents.

JONAS

Grand parents?

THE GIVER

Grandparents. It meant parents-of-the-parents, long ago.

JONAS

Back and back and back? So, actually, there could be parents-of-the-parents-of-the-parents?

THE GIVER

That's right.

JONAS

But my parents must've had parents, too! I never thought of that before. Who are they?

THE GIVER

You could look it up in the Hall of Open Records. You'd find the names. But think, son. If you apply for children, then who will be their grandparents?

JONAS

Well, my parents, of course.

THE GIVER

And where will they be?

JONAS

Oh . . . when I finish my training and become a full adult, I'll be given my own dwelling. And eventually after Lily does, then Mother and Father --

THE GIVER

-- That's right.

---

62.

JONAS

They'll go live with the Childless Adults, and they won't be a part of my life anymore. As long as they're still working and contributing to the community.

THE GIVER

And when the time comes, they'll go to the House of the Old.

JONAS

And they'll be well cared for and respected, and when they're released, there will be a celebration.

THE GIVER

Which you won't attend.

JONAS

No, of course not, because I won't even know about it. By then I'll be so busy with my own life. And Lily will, too. If we choose to apply for children, and get them, they'll never know who their parents-of-the-parents are, either. It seems to work pretty well that way in our community, doesn't it?

THE GIVER

It works, yes.

JONAS

I certainly liked the memory. I

can see why it's your favorite. I couldn't quite get the word for the whole feeling of it, the feeling that was so strong in the room.

THE GIVER

Love.

A MOMENT passes . . .

JONAS

Giver?

THE GIVER

Yes?

---

63.

JONAS

I feel very foolish saying this. Very --

THE GIVER

-- No need. Nothing is foolish here. Trust the memories and how they make you feel.

JONAS

Well, I know you don't have the memory anymore, so you may not understand.

THE GIVER

I will. I still have many memories of family, and holidays, and happiness. Of love.

JONAS

I was thinking that . . . well, I can see that it wasn't a very practical way to live, with the Old right there in the same place, and maybe they wouldn't be taken care of like they should. And the fire burning right there in the room. It was certainly a dangerous way to live, but I was thinking - I mean feeling, actually, that it was kind of nice then. I wish that we could be that way. If only just occasionally. Maybe you could even be my grandparent. It's just - the family in the memory seemed a little more . . .

THE GIVER

A little more complete?

Jonas nods his head in agreement.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - NIGHT

The family unit is just finishing up their evening meal. For the very first time, EVERYTHING on screen is in FULL VIBRANT COLOR.

JONAS  
Mother? Father? I have a  
question to ask you.

---

64.

FATHER  
What is it, Jonas?

He takes a second to build up his mettle.

JONAS  
Do you love me?

SILENCE . . . until an uncomfortable CHUCKLE escapes Father.

FATHER  
Jonas, you of all people.  
Precision of language, please!

JONAS  
What?

MOTHER  
Your father means you used a very  
generalized word, so meaningless  
it's become almost obsolete. And  
of course our community can't  
function smoothly if people don't  
use precise language. You could  
ask, "Do you enjoy me?" The  
answer is, of course, "Yes."

FATHER  
Or, "Do you take pride in my  
accomplishments?" And the answer  
is wholeheartedly, "Yes."

MOTHER  
Do you understand why it's  
inappropriate to use a word like  
"love"?

INSERT: THE SHEET OF PAPER

from Jonas' Assignment folder. Focus in on number eight:  
"You may lie."

Jonas looks at his parents with manufactured sincerity.

JONAS  
Yes, thank you, I do.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Jonas tucks sleepy-eyed Gabe into his crib. He whispers:

---

65.

JONAS

Gabriel? Things could change.  
They could be different. They  
should. I don't know how, Gabe,  
but they can. There could be  
colors in the world again. And  
grandparents. Everyone could have  
memories. I know you already know  
about the memories.

The baby is falling fast asleep. Jonas watches over him.

JONAS

Gabe? There could be love.

INT. FATHER & MOTHER'S SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Father takes his pill.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Mother swallows her pill for the Stirrings.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jonas stands over the sink, staring at his bottle of pills.  
He twists off the cap and pours all of the tablets down the  
drain.

INT. THE GIVER'S ROOM - DAY

Jonas is laying prone on the bed. He looks up at the Giver  
with his solemn eyes.

JONAS

Giver? Do you ever think about  
release?

THE GIVER

Do you mean my own release, or  
just the general topic of release?

JONAS

Both, I guess. I apologi- I mean  
I should have been more precise.  
But I don't know exactly what I  
meant.

---

66.

THE GIVER

Sit back up.

Jonas does so. The Giver takes a moment to mull it over.

THE GIVER

I guess I do think about it occasionally. I think about it when I'm in an awful lot of pain. I wish I could put in a request for it sometimes and just give myself over to its cold embrace.

JONAS

How do you mean cold? Like the snowy hill?

The Giver studies Jonas.

THE GIVER

No, Jonas, not exactly. But, either way, I'm not permitted to apply for release until the new Receiver is trained.

JONAS

Me neither. I can't put in a request for my release. It was in my rules.

THE GIVER

I am aware. They hammered out those rules after the failure ten years ago.

JONAS

Giver . . . tell me what happened. Please.

The Giver shrugs his shoulders.

THE GIVER

On the surface, it was quite simple. A Receiver-to-be was selected, the way you were. The selection went smoothly enough. The Ceremony was held, and the selection was made. The crowd cheered, as they did for you. The new Receiver was puzzled and a little frightened, as you were.

---

67.

JONAS

My parents told me it was a female.

The Giver nods.

JONAS

What was she like?

THE GIVER

She was a truly remarkable young woman. Very self-possessed and serene. Stunning eyes. She was intelligent, eager to learn. You know, Jonas, when she came to me in this room, when she--

JONAS

-- Can you tell me her name? My parents said that it wasn't to be spoken again in the community.

The Giver almost winces, as if in pain.

THE GIVER

Her name was Rosemary.

JONAS

Rosemary . . . I like that name.

THE GIVER

When she came to me for the first time, she sat there in the chair where you sat on your first day. We talked. I tried to explain things as well as I could. The whole thing is so beyond one's experience, but I tried. And she listened. Her eyes were very luminous, I remember. I loved her. I feel the same way of you, Jonas.

JONAS

What happened to her?

THE GIVER

Her training began. She received well, as you do. She was so enthusiastic. So delighted to experience new things. I remember her laughter . . .

---

68.

The Giver's eyes well with tears.

JONAS

What happened?

THE GIVER

It broke my heart, Jonas, to transfer pain to her. Five weeks, that was all. I gave her happy memories: a ride on a merry-go-round; a kitten to play with; a picnic. Sometimes I chose one just because I knew it would make her laugh. But she was like you, Jonas. She wanted to experience everything. And she

asked me for more difficult memories.

JONAS

You didn't give her war after just five weeks, did you?

THE GIVER

No. And I didn't give her physical pain. But I gave her loneliness and loss. I transferred a memory of a child being taken from its parents. That was the first one. She appeared stunned at its end. I backed off, gave her more little delights. But everything changed, once she knew about pain. I could see it in those eyes.

JONAS

She wasn't brave enough?

The Giver takes a deep breath before continuing.

THE GIVER

She insisted that I continue, that I not spare her. She said it was her duty. And I knew, of course, that she was correct. I couldn't bring myself to inflict physical pain on her, but I gave her anguish of many kinds. Poverty, and hunger, and terror. I had to, Jonas. It was my job, and she had been chosen.

---

69.

The Giver wipes his tears.

THE GIVER

Finally, one afternoon, we finished for the day. It had been a hard session. I had to catch up and transfer many memories at one time. I tried - as I do with you - to finish the day with something cheerful. She stood up very silently, then she walked over and put her arms around me. She kissed my cheek. She left here that day and did not go back to her dwelling. I was notified by the Speaker that she had gone directly to the Chief Elder and asked to be released.

JONAS

But it's against the rules.

THE GIVER

It's in your rules, Jonas. But it wasn't in hers. She asked for release and they had to give it to her. I never saw her again.

JONAS

Giver, I can't request release. I know that. But what if something happened? An accident? I know I'm a good swimmer, but what if I wasn't and I fell into the river? A whole year's worth of memories would be released onto the community. And then . . . I - I'm starting to sound like my sister.

THE GIVER

You just stay away from the river. The community lost Rosemary after five weeks and it was a disaster for them. I don't know what the community would do if they ever lost you.

JONAS

Why was it a disaster?

THE GIVER

If you were lost in the river, your memories would not be lost with you. Memories are forever.

(MORE)

---

70.

THE GIVER (cont'd)

Most of Rosemary's memories were good ones, but there were those few of suffering. They overwhelmed the community. All those feelings, and no point of reference! They'd never experienced that before. I was so devastated by my own grief at her loss, that I didn't even try to help them through it. I was angry, too. If they ever lost you, they wouldn't know how to deal with it.

JONAS

The only way I deal with it is by having you there to help me.

THE GIVER

I suppose that I could . . .

JONAS

. . . . You could what?

The Giver is deep in thought.

THE GIVER

If you ever floated off in the river, I suppose I could help the whole community the way I've helped you. It's an interesting concept. I'll have to think about it some more. But I'm glad you're a good swimmer, Jonas.

Jonas laughs, but it's not lighthearted. Both his eyes and the Giver's carry their troubled thoughts.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Jonas, Asher, Fiona, and the rest of their groupmates rise from their desks and exit the classroom at the sound of the speaker-box's TONE.

EXT. RECREATIONAL AREA - DAY

Jonas and Fiona sit on a bench together, some distance away from the rest of their groupmates. They watch the others enjoy their free period as they converse.

---

71.

FIONA

I can hardly believe we are coming up on one full year of training.

JONAS

I feel the same way. It certainly has been a memorable year.

Jonas turns his gaze to Fiona. She's so lovely. So unique and interesting with locks of flaming hair stretching down her back, the perfect frame for her innocent face.

FIONA

For me, too. I've enjoyed it. My training has been--

JONAS

-- Fiona . . .

She turns to Jonas, surprised by his interruption. Jonas almost retreats, but then goes for broke and dives in:

JONAS

Have you started taking your pill regularly? The one everyone has to take. I mean for the Stirrings - I-I mean I'm sorry for asking. I mean I apologize for being rude, but I ask for my training. It has to do with my Receiver training. I'm sorry, I probably should have said that to begin with.

Fiona struggles to find her words for a second.

FIONA

I-I accept your apology, Jonas.

JONAS

You don't need to answer. I should probably ask - I mean . . . um, sorry. I was just thinking of something from my training that I need to know. I can ask the current Receiver probably. He'll let me know.

FIONA

Very well . . .

JONAS

Yes . . .

---

72.

They simply sit there, looking out at their groupmates.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - NIGHT

The family unit is gathered around the table for their evening meal. Little Gabriel plays merrily on the floor, BABBLING his baby talk.

LILY

(referring to  
Gabriel)

Look at him!

MOTHER

Lily, finish your meal, then look at him.

FATHER

Little guy should enjoy it. It's his last night here.

LILY

Why?!

JONAS

What do you mean, Father?

FATHER

Well, it seemed like a good idea to have him spend the night in the Nurturing Center yesterday. He had been sleeping so soundly with you, Jonas. But, unfortunately, it was a disaster. Apparently he cried the whole night. When I got to work in the morning the night crew was pretty frazzled.

LILY

Gabe, you naughty thing!

MOTHER

Lily, concentrate on your meal.  
(to Father)  
So, what's next?

FATHER

Well, obviously we had to make the decision. Even I voted for Gabriel's release at the meeting this afternoon. We certainly gave it our best try, didn't we?

---

73.

MOTHER

Yes, we did. A shame.

JONAS

(to Father)

When?

FATHER

It's scheduled for a few weeks from now. Tomorrow morning we have the release of one of the twins, so we'll be busy with that. The upcoming Ceremony will probably even push it back a little further.

(baby voice)

But then it's bye-bye for baby Gabe.

Father playfully waves goodbye to Gabriel. The child waves back.

EXT. ANNEX - DAY

Jonas approaches the front entrance and BUZZES himself in.

INT. THE GIVER'S ROOM - DAY

Jonas enters.

JONAS

Hello, Giver.

THE GIVER

Welcome, Jonas. We should get right to work.

JONAS

Yes, I've been wasting a lot of our sessions with questions about release recently.

THE GIVER

Not one moment was a waste.

Jonas takes a seat.

JONAS

I've just been curious lately, I suppose. Back at my dwelling, my father's been telling us about the the twins at the Nurturing Center.

(MORE)

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74.

JONAS (cont'd)

He had to release one today. That's probably it.

THE GIVER

I wish they wouldn't do that.

JONAS

Release one twin? Well, they can't have two identical citizens around. Think how confusing it would be.

Jonas takes a seat. Then, as an afterthought:

JONAS

I wish I could watch . . .

THE GIVER

You can watch.

JONAS

But they never let children in. Isn't it very private?

THE GIVER

Jonas, I know you read your training instructions very carefully. Don't you remember that you're allowed to ask anyone anything at any time?

JONAS

Of course, but--

THE GIVER

-- If you want to watch a release, you have simply to ask.

JONAS

Well, maybe I will, then. But it's too late for this one. I'm sure it was this morning.

THE GIVER

All private ceremonies are recorded. They're in the Hall of Closed Records. Do you want to see this morning's release?

Jonas freezes, mouth slightly agape.

THE GIVER  
I think you should.

JONAS  
All right, then.

The Giver makes his way across the room to the speaker-box on the wall. He flips the switch up to the "ON" position.

SPEAKER (V.O.)  
Yes, Receiver. How may I help you?

THE GIVER  
I would like to see this morning's release of the twin.

SPEAKER (V.O.)  
One moment, Receiver. Thank you for your instructions.

The Giver returns to his seat and points Jonas' attention to a video screen on another wall in the room.

ON SCREEN

the glass face flashes on with a series of numeric code. Suddenly, the screen shows a windowless room, empty save for a bed and an operating table covered with equipment.

Jonas' father, in full Nurturing garb, enters the cramped operating room with a NEWCHILD in his arms. A FEMALE ASSISTANT follows Father in, carrying the newchild's TWIN.

ON JONAS & THE GIVER

JONAS  
That's my father . . .

The Giver SHUSHES him.

ON SCREEN

Father and his assistant lay the naked babies down on the bed. One by one, Father picks up the twins and places them on a scale. After he weighs the second one:

FATHER  
Good. I thought for a second they were going to be the same weight. Then we'd really have a problem. But he's six pounds even. You can take him over to the Care Center.

The assistant takes the six-pound child out through the door she entered, leaving Father and the other newchild alone.

FATHER  
(baby voice)  
And you, little guy, you're only  
five pounds ten ounces. A shrimp!

ON JONAS & THE GIVER

THE GIVER  
Watch . . .

JONAS  
Now he cleans him up and makes him  
comfortable. He told me.

THE GIVER  
Jonas, be quiet. Watch.

ON SCREEN

Father reveals a syringe set and a bottle of lucid, bubbly  
liquid. He stabs the needle through the bottle's rubber  
lid, extracting the clear cocktail into the syringe.

Father wipes the newchild's forehead with an alcohol prep  
and casually STICKS the needle into the spot where the  
baby's head is pulsing.

The child squirms and WALLS FAINTLY.

FATHER  
I know, little guy, I know. But  
the veins in your arms are still  
too teeny-weeny. All done.

Father pushes down the plunger, emptying the syringe. The  
baby's extremities jerk in a violent convulsion. His head  
slacks to the side, eyes half open. He is completely still.

ON JONAS & THE GIVER

as both their eyes fill with tears. Jonas' mouth hangs  
open. The Giver shakes his head.

ON SCREEN

as Father tidies the room. He lifts a carton from the floor  
and loads the child's corpse into it.

He opens a chute on the wall and loads the carton in.

---

77.

The screen goes BLACK. Back to JONAS & THE GIVER:

THE GIVER  
When the Speaker notified me that  
Rosemary had been released, they  
turned on the tape to show me the  
process. There she was - my last  
glimpse at that beautiful child -  
waiting. They brought in the  
syringe and asked her to roll up

her sleeve. You suggested, Jonas, that perhaps she wasn't brave enough? I don't know much about bravery. I do know that I sat there numb with horror. Wretched with helplessness. I sat there and listened as Rosemary told them that she would prefer to inject herself.

The Giver loses control of his emotions. Jonas wraps him in a tight embrace and begins to WEEP HEAVILY.

TIME CUT - NIGHT

Jonas and the Giver are slumped lazily in their chairs, completely drained from their mutual outpour of emotion.

JONAS

Is it always like that with release? For the Old? For people who break the community rules three times? Do they kill the Old?

THE GIVER

Yes. It's always the same.

JONAS

What about Fiona? She loves the Old. Does she know yet?

THE GIVER

Your friend is already being trained in the fine art of release. Feelings are not part of the life she's learned.

JONAS

What should I do? I can't go back.

The Giver rises from his seat.

---

78.

THE GIVER

First, I will order our evening meal. Then we will eat.

Jonas pipes up with bitter sarcasm:

JONAS

Then we'll have a sharing of feelings?

The Giver lets out an empty belt of laughter. He walks over and rubs Jonas' hunched shoulders.

THE GIVER

Jonas, you and I are the only ones who have feelings. We've been

sharing them now for almost a year.

JONAS  
I'm sorry, Giver. I don't mean to be so hateful. Not to you.

The Giver walks toward the speaker-box on the wall.

JONAS (cont'd)  
And, after we eat, we'll make a plan.

The Giver stops short of the speaker-box; turns to Jonas.

THE GIVER  
A plan for what?

Jonas answers his mentor with a simple look: one of determination, self-assurance, destiny.

THE GIVER  
Very well.

EXT. AREA OF DWELLINGS - DAY

Jonas rides his bike up to his dwelling.

THE GIVER (O.S.)  
The community has depended, all these generations, back and back and back, on a resident Receiver to hold their memories for them. The good, the bad, the unspeakably horrific, and the unbelievably beautiful; all of them. I've turned over many of them to you,  
(MORE)

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79.

THE GIVER (cont'd)  
and I cannot take back what I have given. So, if you escape, once you are gone, Jonas, you know that you can never return . . .

Jonas ports his bicycle and walks into his dwelling.

JONAS (O.S.)  
Yes.

THE GIVER (O.S.)  
If you get away, if you get beyond, if you get Elsewhere, it will mean that the community has to bear the burden themselves, of the memories you had been holding for them. A full year's worth of agony and ecstasy.

INT. JONAS' DWELLING - DINING AREA - DAY

Jonas and his family unit quietly eat their standard morning meals at the table.

JONAS (O.S.)

I'll leave at midnight, the morning of the annual Ceremonies. I'll be careful. No one will see me.

THE GIVER (O.S.)

As Receiver-in-training, you're held in very high respect already. So I think you wouldn't be questioned very forcefully. There's no nighttime attendant here at the Annex. I'll leave the door unlocked. You simply slip into the room. I'll be waiting for you.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Jonas and his groupmates listen to the ramblings of their Instructor in the middle of a lesson.

THE GIVER (O.S.)

Leave your parents a note, telling them that you decided to go on a morning ride along the river. Write that you'll be back in time  
(MORE)

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80.

THE GIVER (cont'd)

for the Ceremony. They'll be irritated, but not alarmed.

JONAS (O.S.)

They won't mention anything to anyone, because it would reflect on their parenting. And anyway, everyone is so involved in the Ceremonies that they probably won't notice that I'm not there.

INT. THE GIVER'S ROOM - DAY

Jonas and the Giver sit across from each other.

THE GIVER

I'll save and package portions from all of my meals in the few weeks we still have until the Ceremony. I'll give them all to you when you arrive.

JONAS

Be sure to save plenty . . .

because I'm taking Gabriel with me. I wish you would come, too.

The Giver regretfully shakes his head.

JONAS

I understand they'll need you.

THE GIVER

My work will be finished when I have helped the community to change and become a whole.

JONAS

But don't you want to be with me, Giver?

THE GIVER

Jonas, I love you. But my role is to stay. You're forgetting my age. I would never make it. I'm drained. Did you know that I no longer see color?

Jonas' eyes almost burst with tears.

---

81.

THE GIVER

We don't know what lies beyond our community and the bordering communities we associate with, Jonas. There may be nothing at all, or there may be serious danger, or there may be everything you're looking for.

JONAS

There may be love. There may be freedom. I won't find any of that here.

THE GIVER

Well, then . . . You have the colors now. And the strength. I'll transfer my remaining memories of warmth to you. Also, it's about time I transferred something else to you. I think I've been a bit selfish. I wanted to hold it for myself as long as I could, but you need to understand everything before you go.

JONAS

What is it?

THE GIVER

When I was a boy, younger than you, it wasn't the seeing beyond that came to me. It was

different. For me, it was  
hearing-beyond.

JONAS  
What did you hear?

THE GIVER  
Music. I began to hear something  
truly remarkable, and it's called  
music. I'll give you some before  
you go.

JONAS  
No, Giver. I want you to keep  
that, to have with you, when I'm  
gone.

The Giver smiles gently.

---

82.

JONAS  
Are you sure you're not coming  
with me?

A genuine laugh escapes The Giver.

THE GIVER  
Oh, no! No, I have another place  
to go. When my work is done here,  
I want to finally be with my  
daughter.

JONAS  
Giver! You told me you had a  
spouse, but you have never  
mentioned a daughter.

The Giver smiles wide and nods. For the very first time, he  
looks TRULY HAPPY.

THE GIVER  
Yes. Her name was Rosemary.

INT. FATHER & MOTHER'S SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

They are fast asleep in their respective beds.

INT. LILY'S SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

She sleeps peacefully, as well.

INT. JONAS' SLEEPING-ROOM - NIGHT

Jonas, operating quietly in the dark, folds his extra tunics  
and bundles them together with a piece of sturdy thread.

He places a sheet of paper on his bed with all the details  
the Giver ordered him to leave.

He ties Gabriel's sleeping body to his own with the child's blanket and tiptoes out of the room.

EXT. JONAS' DWELLING - NIGHT

Jonas sneaks up to his family's row of bicycles with Gabe. He selects his father's bike with the sturdy carrying basket in the front and the molded child seat in the back.

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83.

Jonas hops on with Gabe and they ride off through the area of dwellings.

EXT. CENTRAL PLAZA - NIGHT

A last look at the flavorless city center, as it sits dead in the still of the night. Jonas and Gabriel zip through on Father's bike.

INT. THE GIVER'S ROOM - NIGHT

The Giver gives Jonas a hefty satchel of food. They embrace.

JONAS  
There's love out there.

The Giver looks at the newchild resting peacefully against Jonas' chest and manages a sincere smile.

THE GIVER  
Godspeed, my son.

The Giver returns to his chair. Jonas leaves.

EXT. THE BRIDGE - NIGHT

The two young fugitives ride over the old cobblestone bridge.

EXT. ANOTHER COMMUNITY - NIGHT

Jonas pedals past one of the separate, outlying communities. Their dark, uniform buildings are just barely visible, traced out against the night sky.

EXT. UNKNOWN TERRITORY - NIGHT

The paved road continues through a wild area with expansive fields of trees and shrubbery. Jonas looks to be tiring, but he pedals on, determined.

EXT. FOREST AREA - DAY

Jonas and Gabriel rest in a patch of soft grass under the veil of the towering trees of the area. Jonas feeds Gabe and himself a few morsels from the satchel.

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84.

EXT. UNKNOWN TERRITORY - NIGHT

Gabriel sits in the rear child seat now, as Jonas pushes along the path looking as strong as ever. THE SOUND OF AN ENGINE ROARS FROM BEHIND.

Jonas recognizes the sound and turns into a nearby bush. He drops the bike and dives behind the shrubbery with Gabriel in his arms.

INT. AIRCRAFT COCKPIT - NIGHT

Focus on the pilot's control board, which is populated by an overabundance of buttons, switches, and other advanced technological tools. One of the gadgets is labeled as a heat-seeking view screen.

UNKNOWN TERRITORY - BUSHES

Jonas frantically places his hands against Gabe's back, closes his eyes, and transfers a memory.

COCKPIT

The view screen is only picking up cool blobs of gray in the area.

UNKNOWN TERRITORY - BUSHES

Jonas and Gabe are shivering in the bush, as the sound of the airplane's engine fades away.

EXT. UNTAMED TERRAIN - DAY

The paved roads disappear, and Jonas rides down the narrowing path over stones and ruts.

The bike's front tire catches a large rock and CRASHES into the dirt. Gabe is fine, but Jonas winces in pain as the result of a scraped knee.

EXT. RUNNING STREAM - DAY

Gabriel helps Jonas rinse off his bloody knee in the water.

UNTAMED TERRAIN

Jonas braves on, pushing the pedals non-stop. Suddenly, Gabe points his chubby arm to the sky:

---

GABRIEL

Pane! Pane!

That's how he says "plane." Jonas veers them off the pathway and under the nearest assemblage of vegetation.

Hearing no roaring engine, Jonas pokes his head out from the trees and sees nothing more than your average jaybird soaring through the sky.

GABRIEL

It's a pane!

Jonas smiles.

TIME CUT - NIGHT

They ride all night, worn and dirtied, every second taking them farther and farther away.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Jonas chases his adopted brother through the tall grass. They LAUGH and HOLLER with delight as they tackle each other, get up, and run around some more.

EXT. UNTAMED TERRAIN - DAY

Jonas and Gabe have stopped in the middle of nowhere to stare at a pair of deer nosing around some bushes. Gabriel points at the animals excitedly:

GABRIEL

Oohhh! Oohhh!

EXT. POND - DAY

Jonas and Gabriel sit by the muddy water and eat the last of the food from their satchel.

EXT. UNTAMED TERRAIN - NIGHT

Jonas pedals through the night as it rains down heavily, soaking everything in sight.

EXT. RUNNING STREAM - DAY

Jonas kneels by the stream and randomly jabs his fists into the water, trying to catch a fish.

TIME CUT

Jonas weaves the the strands of Gabe's blanket around a curved stick.

TIME CUT

Jonas swoops his makeshift net into the stream again and again. After countless tries, he comes up with a single flapping, silvery fish.

INT. PATCH OF SHRUBBERY - NIGHT

Jonas pounds the dead fish with a rock. He and Gabriel share the raw shreds.

EXT. UNTAMED TERRAIN - DAY

Jonas and Gabriel ride on, looking very weary, with their clothes torn and faces dirtied.

EXT. GRASSY AREA - NIGHT

Baby Gabe lay sleeping next to Jonas, who is wide awake.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

A group of SEVENS stand in the line, waiting to receive their midday meals. One of them is SEVEN-YEAR-OLD JONAS. He is standing in front of SEVEN-YEAR-OLD ASHER.

JONAS  
(to Asher)  
I'm starving.

An INSTRUCTOR standing nearby overhears this.

INSTRUCTOR  
Jonas!

The Instructor stomps over and pulls Jonas out of line, leading him away from the other children.

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INSTRUCTOR  
Jonas, you must learn to use more precise language. You are not starving, that is a gross exaggeration. You simply have some feelings of hunger, because it is time for the midday meal.

JONAS  
I apologize for not speaking precisely, Instructor.

INSTRUCTOR  
I accept your apology, Jonas. As long as you are a part of this

community, you will never be  
starving.

BACK TO THE GRASSY AREA

Jonas pulls Gabriel's sleeping body closer to his own and begins to WEEP softly.

EXT. SOMEWHERE COLD - NIGHT

Jonas and Gabe slowly pedal down the endless ribbon of path in front of them. They appear weak and drained; as miserable as can be. Jonas rounds the the narrow curves in the road with less urgency than before.

A soft, swirling downfall of white begins to descend upon them. They're shivering.

As the snowfall thickens, they ride up to the base of a tall hill blanketed in frosty white precipitation.

Jonas pulls Gabe from the child seat and drops the bike. He wraps the child's torn and dirtied blanket around the both of them, again securing Gabriel in place against his chest.

He whispers:

JONAS  
It's called snow, Gabe. They're  
called snowflakes. They're  
beautiful . . .

Jonas begins scaling the snowy hill. He has to force his tired legs with every step. As he presses on, Jonas places his hands against Gabe's back and concentrates.

---

88.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The sun beats down radiantly, but only for a second and then they are transported

BACK TO SOMEWHERE COLD

Back to the snowy hill. Jonas continues trudging up the hill, until he trips over a mound of snow and falls. He slowly regains his footing, then places his hands on Gabriel's back once more.

BACK TO THE BEACH

The sun shines brilliantly but, even quicker than it happened before, it is

BACK TO SOMEWHERE COLD

Back to the snowy hill. Jonas looks down at Gabe in his arms. The newchild's usually rosy cheeks have been tinted

blue, with dried tear stains outlined in dirt. He is in a DEEP SLEEP.

Jonas fights on, dragging his heavy feet up the hill, until he reaches the summit. Jonas stops walking, finally on level ground. The snow swirls in the air. He smiles.

JONAS

We're almost there, Gabe. I remember this place.

Jonas walks to the opposite edge of the hill and sits down on the RED SLED. He holds Gabriel tight and brushes away the powdery snow beneath him until his hands find the rope.

Jonas blows his breath into the air and watches it drift away with the snowflakes. He sits intoxicated by the surreal beauty of the scene before him, as he stares off into space . . .

Finally, he leans his body forward, and they start down on the sled, slicing through the ice with ease. Down and down, faster and faster.

JONAS' POV -

through the whipping wind and thick, swirling snow. It's difficult to see, but there are LIGHTS dancing along the horizon . . .

A faint echo of MUSIC flutters, and then BUILDS. PEOPLE SINGING. The harmonious MELODY plays like a lullaby.

---

89.

Jonas smiles in ecstasy with sleeping Gabriel clamped tightly to his torso. The sled picks up speed as it zips down the final diagonal stretch of the snowy hill.

The music. The colors. The snow. Down, down, down; faster, faster, faster.

CUT TO BLACK

THE END