

Name _____



The Power of Choice

Jonas had always followed the rules of his community without question. In his world, everything was carefully controlled—there was no pain, no war, and no hunger. But there was also no choice. Every person’s job, family, and future were decided for them. Jonas believed this was the best way to live—until he was chosen to be the Receiver of Memory.

As the Receiver, Jonas was given memories of the past—memories of

things no one else in the community had ever experienced. He felt the warmth of the sun, the excitement of a sled ride, and the love of a family. But he also learned about suffering. He saw war, hunger, and loneliness. For the first time, he understood what had been taken from his community—not just pain, but also the ability to choose their own paths.

Jonas started to see that individuality—the ability to be different, to make choices, to feel emotions—was missing from his world. The people in his community were safe, but they weren’t truly living. They had been taught that sameness was good, that differences led to problems. But now Jonas knew the truth: without differences, without emotions, without choice, there was no real life at all.

His heart ached as he realized that even his parents did not truly love him. They cared for him, but they did not know what love was. They did not get to choose their spouses or their jobs. Even babies were assigned to families instead of being born naturally. Everything in Jonas’s world had been designed to make life easier, but it had taken away what made people unique.

Jonas could not go back to the way things were. He knew that if he stayed, he would have to pretend that he didn’t know the truth. He would have to act as if love, color, and memories did not exist. He could not do that.

So, he made a choice—the first real choice of his life. He would leave the community, even if it was dangerous. He would take Gabriel, a baby who was about to be “released,” and escape to a place where people could be free to live as individuals.

Jonas no longer wanted to conform. He wanted to be himself.