

## Scene 1

### Father, Lily and Mother

Father: Who wants to be the first tonight for feelings?

Lily: 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*. I was so angry at one male, I made my hand into a fist, like this.

Father: Where were the visitors from?

Lily: Some other community. I don't remember.

Mother: How did you feel when your group of Sixers visited another community last year?

Lily: Strange. They were learning usages my group hadn't learned yet, so we felt stupid.

Father: Do you think that the boy today felt strange and stupid, being in a new place with rules he didn't know about?

Lily: ....yes.

Mother: I feel a little sorry for him.

Lily: Me too. And sorry I made a fist. Thank you.

Father: Well, I'm feeling a little worried.

Mother: What about?

Father: One of the new children isn't doing well.

Lily: What gender is it?

Father: Male. He's a sweet little male, but he's not growing as fast as he should and he doesn't sleep soundly. The other Nurturers and I have him in the extra care section, but the Committee's beginning to talk about releasing him.

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

Father: I may ask the Committee for permission to bring him here at night, if you don't mind. I don't want to trust him to the night crew. I think he needs something extra.

Mother: of course.

Lily: Maybe we could even keep him!

Mother: Lily-

Lily: I know. Two children to each family. Very clear.

Father: Thank you.

## Scene 2

### Father, Mother and Jonas

Father: When I was Eleven as you are, Jonas, I was very impatient waiting for the Ceremony of Twelve. I enjoyed the Naming of the Ones as I always do, but I didn't much pay attention to the other ceremonies, except my sister – she became a Nine that year, and we watched and cheered when she removed her hair ribbons and got her bicycle. I'd been training her on mine, even though I wasn't supposed to. *(Mother and Jonas laugh.)*

Jonas: Everybody breaks that rule.

Mother: I think the Committee is looking into lowering the age of Bicycle-riding –

Father: So I cheered Katy and her bike and I didn't pay much attention to the Tens and Elevens and finally at the end of the second day, it was my turn-

Jonas: The Ceremony of Twelve.

Father: *(nods)* My parents looked so proud. Even my sister, though she wanted to be out riding her bicycle publicly-but to be honest, there wasn't the suspense there is for your Ceremony. I was already fairly certain what my assignment was going to be.

Jonas: How? It's a secret. The Committee of Elders don't tell anyone what their assignment's going to be-

Mother: Yes, how'd you know?

Father: I knew what my gift was. When my friends in my age group were holding bike races or building vehicles or bridges with their construction sets-

Jonas: Like I do with my friends –

Father: I was always drawn to new children. I spent all my volunteer hours at the Nurturing Center. The Elders knew that.

Jonas: They've been watching me a lot at school. They watch all the Elevens and take notes.

Father: They don't make mistakes. So when my assignment was announced as Nurturer, it wasn't a big surprise. It was what I most wanted.

Jonas: But I don't know what I most want. I don't know what my gift is. What if I'm disappointed with my assignment?

Mother: They'll find exactly the right assignment for you. Don't worry. *(she rumples his hair)* And after your Ceremony you'll be training with your Assignment Group-

Father: No more volunteer hours. No more recreation hours. Your old friends won't be as close-

Jonas: *(shaking his head)* But Asher and I will always be friends, right? And we'll still be in school-

Father: Absolutely. There'll just be changes.

Mother: Good changes, though. After my Ceremony, when I entered my training for Law and Justice, I found myself with people who shared my interests. I made friends on a new level, friends of all ages-

Jonas: Did you still play after Twelve?

Mother: Occasionally. But it didn't seem as important to me.

Father: I still do! Every day in the Nurturing Center. Bounce on the Knee, Peek-a-Boo, Hug the Teddy. Fun doesn't end when you become Twelve.

## CALLBACKS

### Callback – Scene 1

#### Jonas and the Giver

Jonas: What's the point of being the Receiver if I can't share anything with anyone?

Giver: The Council of Elders will ask you for counsel and advice.

Jonas: Do you advise the often?

Giver: Rarely. I wish they'd ask my wisdom more often. There are so many things I could tell them, things I wish they'd change...but they don't want to change. Life here is painless. It's what they've chosen.

Jonas: Then why do they need a Receiver?

Giver: Oh, they need me. And you. They were reminded of that ten years ago.

Jonas: When you tried to train a successor?

Giver: And failed. Then the new Receiver failed, the memories she had received were released. They didn't come back to me. They went...I don't know exactly. Someplace out there. And then the people had access to them. It was chaos. They really suffered for a while. Finally, it subsided as the memories were assimilated. But it certainly made them aware of how they need a Receiver to contain all that pain. And knowledge.

Jonas: But you have to suffer like that all the time.

Giver: It's my life. It will be yours.

Jonas: I haven't suffered, have I? *(The Giver is silent)* There was the sunburn you gave me on the very first day. But that wasn't so terrible. What makes you suffer so much? If you gave some of it to me, maybe your pain would be less.

Giver: Lie down. I can't shield you forever. *(Jonas lies down)* All right. We'll start with something familiar. Let's go again to a hill. And a sled.

*(He puts his hand on Jonas back.)*

Jonas: The hill's steeper. The ice – too much ice – AAHHH!! MY LEG!!

*Jonas is about to throw up – screaming – he rolls over grasping his leg*

Jonas: My leg was...it was broken...My leg broke

Giver: Yes

Jonas: It still aches...may...may I have relief of pain? Please?

Giver: No. This is only the beginning of the pain. It will get much...much worse.

### **Callback monologue – the Giver**

When they notified me that Rosemary had appealed for release, they turned on the tape to show me the process. There she was, my last glimpse of that beautiful child...they brought in the syringe and asked her to roll up her sleeve. You suggested she wasn't brave enough? I don't know about bravery, but I do know I sat there numb with horror. And I listened to Rosemary tell them she would prefer to inject herself. Then she did so. I didn't watch. I looked away. And there you are Jonas. You were wondering about release.

### **Callback monologues - Announcer**

Announcer: Attention. There is no cause for alarm. The low-flying airplane seen over the community today was not a threat. A pilot-in-training merely misread his navigational instructions and made a wrong turn. Realizing he was breaking the rules, he was trying to find his way back before his error was noticed. He apologizes for any alarm he may have raised. (Beat) Needless to say, he will be released.

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Announcer: 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. Thank you.

### **Callback monologues – Chief Elder**

I know that you are all concerned. I have caused you all anxiety. I apologize to my Community. Jonas, I apologize to you in particular. I caused you anguish. Jonas has not been assigned. Jonas has been selected. Jonas has been selected to be our next Receiver of Memory. Such a selection is very, very rare. Our community has only one Receiver. It is he who trains his successor. We have had one Receiver for a very long time. We failed in our last selection. It was ten years ago and 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. With other Twelves we can monitor training and modify behavior, but the Receiver-in-training cannot be observed, cannot be modified. He is to be alone, apart while he prepares for the most honored job in the Community.