

Feed Study Guide

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Plot Summary

In *Feed* by M.T. Anderson, Titus is a teenager with a feed, or transmitter implanted in his brain. He and his friends live their lives by suggestions, such as advertisements, from the feed. Titus' love interest Violet does not agree with the feed, especially after a traumatic experience. Titus goes on a journey to discover what the feed really means.

Titus is an average teenager, except he has a feed, or transmitter implanted in his brain. He lives in the United States somewhere at least one hundred years or so in the future. Titus is a typical, immature teenager who is bored by everything. The feed constantly streams technology and media, i.e., feed shows, radio and advertisements, in his head. Titus and his friends live by the feed. Anything they desire, the feed reads and gives them constant suggestions to buy.

As he and his friends party on the moon, he meets Violet. At a nightclub, Titus, Violet and his friends get hacked into and they all must have their feeds turned off. This is a traumatic experience for them because they must live like normal humans. They stay in the hospital and have their feeds turned back on finally.

They go back home to the United States. Titus and Violet deepen their relationship and begin to fall in love. As Titus is getting to know her, he discovers she comes from a poor family, whereas his family is wealthy. She is also a traditionalist, or someone who can read, write and knows how to do other normal, human things. The feed does not dominate her life. She does not fit in with Titus' friends, who live and die by the feed. As Titus becomes closer to Violet, he pulls away from his friends and sees their immaturity. Violet is extremely intelligent and questions the feed. She thinks it makes the human race stupid and simple. She tries to fight the feed by conducting an experiment to confuse the feed.

Due to the hack, Violet is dying. She continually becomes paralyzed and knows she will die soon. This devastates Titus, since they are falling in love. At a party, she goes into convulsions and completely malfunctions. As days go by, different areas of her body freeze. Titus cannot handle this intense situation and they break up. He moves onto another girl and goes back to being immature and silly with his friends. When she is completely brain dead, he goes to see her and reads her facts, stories and political news. He resists the feed as he tells her these things. He says their story is one of two teenagers in love who learn to resist the feed.



Part 1, Moon: Your Face Is Not an Organ; Impact; Juice

Part 1, Moon: Your Face Is Not an Organ; Impact; Juice Summary

Feed by M.T. Anderson is about Titus, a teenager with the feed implanted into his head. He meets literate and traditionalist Violet and this makes him think about the feed. While she copes with her impending death, she teaches Titus to resist the feed.

In *Your Face Is Not an Organ*, Titus, the teenage narrator of the novel, and his friends go to the moon to have fun. Yet the moon is boring. They go on a Friday to go to the Ricochet Lounge, a low gravity nightclub where they wear space suits and bounce off one another. Besides Titus, his guy friends Link and Marty join him. Three female friends, Calista, Loga and Quendy come along too.

They fly up to the moon. Their feeds continue to talk to them about where to stay and what to do on the moon. A feed is a transmitter directly implanted into their brains. Titus says he needs noise in space because it tends to feel empty. Titus hopes to meet someone on the moon.

In *Impact*, they get off the moon ship and their feeds are going off about places to go, where to shop, etc. The banners blind Titus. The banners stop and Titus' feed is clear. They go to the Ricochet Lounge. Titus mentions the boys have noticeable lesions on their bodies.

In the Ricochet Lounge, they slam into each other. Titus sees the most beautiful girl he has ever seen. She dresses in gray wool. Then the reader sees Titus' feed, which are advertisements.

In *Juice*, Titus goes to the bar. The girl opens her mouth, which is full of juice. She moves the juice out of her mouth with her tongue, due to the low gravity, and makes the juice float in front of her. Titus is turned on by this.

Part 1, Moon: Your Face Is Not an Organ; Impact; Juice Analysis

In *Your Face Is Not an Organ*, Titus says that he needs noise in space. Space to him is empty. At this point in the novel, the reader does not know which planet Titus comes from, thus the reader cannot compare it to Titus' home. Yet his home must be full of life and excitement if space is devoid of energy. This description of the moon foreshadows that exciting, future activity will take place on his home planet. The idea of emptiness in

space also symbolizes the emptiness of Titus. He feels this emptiness, thus the reader senses Titus may be unhappy or something is missing in his life.

The idea of a feed symbolizes the thoughts that clutter a person's brain all the time. However, in this world, the feeds are literal and advertisements constantly clutter the brains of Titus and his friends. The reader has yet to find out how these feeds were placed in their brains, and this foreshadows that the feeds may be an integral part of getting Titus and his friends out of a bad situation later on.

In Impact, Titus mentions the boys have lesions. There is no explanation given to how these lesions started and why they exist. This foreshadows a possible system of punishment or serious physical detriment in this world.

In Juice, the actual juice symbolizes the hormones rushing through Titus' body when he sees the girl doing this juice trick. He is stimulated and the juice represents this built-up stimulation, without Titus having to explain he is stimulated.



Part 1, Moon: The Nose Grid; The Moon Is in the House of Boring

Part 1, Moon: The Nose Grid; The Moon Is in the House of Boring Summary

In *The Nose Grid*, Quendy is upset because her lesion spreads, but Calista insists it is not spreading. Link asks the girl in gray if the lesion is bad. She explains that each face has an imaginary nose grid. The vertical line cuts down the center and the horizontal line cuts across the top of the cheeks. The nose is the center of the two lines. Any lesion that is not on these lines looks fine, thus Quendy's lesion is fine. The girl says it frames Quendy's face, and Quendy is happy. The others are stunned at the girl's brilliance. The girl and the other girls go to the bathroom to arrange Quendy's hair around the lesion. Quendy is happily the center of attention. Titus wants to be with the girl more than anything. Titus's feed goes off with advertisements, including one about the Rumble Spot.

In *The Moon Is in the House of Boring*, the girl's name is Violet. She is on spring break all alone to observe. Titus suggests going to the Rumble Spot, but they end up shopping. In the street, young protesters call out, "Chip in my head? I'm better off dead" to Titus and his friends (p. 32). They go to the Rumble Spot. They all chat one another, or speak telepathically. Violet and Titus notice an old man with a bow tie. The gravity turns off and Violet grabs onto Titus. The old man comes over and chants "we enter a time of calamity" over and over (p.38). He touches Titus and then the others. They chant uncontrollably too. Everyone stares and backs away. The police come and beat the man. The police turn off Titus and his friends, and everything shuts off in their heads.

Part 1, Moon: The Nose Grid; The Moon Is in the House of Boring Analysis

In *The Nose Grid*, the others are blown away by the girl's brilliance. The girl represents a higher being, or the intelligence level that is not seen in the group. She is an old soul already—older and wiser than the teenagers she encounters. She is still a mystery though. Her presence foreshadows a future situation where the others may need the girl to get out of a bad situation.

Also in *The Nose Grid*, the Rumble Spot is an advertisement for a chaotic nightclub. The advertisement says it is chaos in a sea of tranquility. The Rumble Spot symbolizes Titus' feelings toward the girl. He is all mixed up. He wants to be with her, but cannot speak to her. Emotionally, he is confused and chaotic, like the Rumble Spot.



In *The Moon Is in the House of Boring*, Titus's want to go to the Rumble Spot symbolizes his want to explore his feelings for Violet. As he enters the club, he also delves into his emotional feelings. However, as the club's name suggests, his feelings are chaotic and he is not sure how things will turn out.

At this point in the novel, the reader realizes that Titus, Violet and his friends must have a defining physical feature to show they have feeds, since the protestors recognize them and shout at them. In addition, they must be a special type or race of humans because the dangerous "drug" is to lobotomize oneself. The chanting old man is a feed gone bad or wrong, and literally infects Titus and his friends when he touches them. Therefore, Titus and his friends represent an outcast society, or a society that may be in danger later on in the novel.



Part 2, Eden: Awake; College Try; Boring; Still Boring

Part 2, Eden: Awake; College Try; Boring; Still Boring Summary

In *Awake*, Titus wakes up in a bed with his feed off. There is no transmission signal and he is disconnected from his feednet, or feed network. He tries to chat his friends and his parents on Earth, but he cannot. He opens his eyes.

In *College Try*, Violet says she is disconnected from her feed too. They are in a hospital. Link is still asleep. Violet calls out Titus for trying to look through her hospital gown. They do not know what to do.

In *Boring*, the hospital room is boring. They stare at the walls. Machines monitor their brains and blood. There is a picture of a boat on one wall, but it is not interesting. Titus does not understand why anyone would paint it.

In *Still Boring*, Loga is the only one who was not touched by the old man. Thirteen are touched and in the ward. The police say the old man was a hacker, and they must keep off the feeds to collect evidence for court and check for viruses. The police say the old man was the worst kind of hacker. Titus and his friends touch their heads, which feel empty. There is gravity at the hospital to keep them in bed.

Part 2, Eden: Awake; College Try; Boring; Still Boring Analysis

In these very short, one page chapters, Titus' feed is off, and it is an experience that is not normal for him. The reader now knows his parents are from Earth, which most likely makes him human. The feed being turned off represents the ability to think being shut off. Titus and his friends have emotions such as fear in the hospital, but they cannot think of what to do next. In essence, they are simply human.

Titus continues with his theme of boring. To Titus, everything is boring, whether it is the moon or the hospital room. He is always bored, despite his feed. This symbolizes Titus as an average teenager, since teenagers constantly complain of everything being boring. Though he is a super human of some kind, he is still a teenager and he still has the same emotions as one.



Part 2, Eden: Missing the Feed; Cache & Carry; Night. And Boring; Father

Part 2, Eden: Missing the Feed; Cache & Carry; Night. And Boring; Father Summary

In Missing the Feed, Titus misses his feed. When feeds were created, it was 50 to 100 years ago. People used to carry around the feeds. Then brain feeds were created and people were very excited about them. The feeds created a highly intelligent human race. People are walking encyclopedias. The corporations also use the feeds to see what people want and sell accordingly to their wants. Titus thinks the corporations run everything and may be evil, but he likes having things when he wants them. Titus is annoyed his feed is off. He feels like the boat painting. There is a boat ready to sail, but no one is on board to watch the view.

In Cache & Carry, Titus flips through two cached pages. One is a message from the hacker. The other is a sale at Weatherbee & Crotch, which has a shirt he really wants to buy.

In Night. And Boring, it is Saturday night in the hospital. Their parents are probably on the moon and will be at the hospital tomorrow morning. Violet is upset and cries. She just wanted one normal night, and this is what happens. She says she is screwed. But Titus does not comfort her because he feels it will be a lot of work.

In Father, Titus's father comes to the hospital. He is in business attire. He speaks like his son, in teenage slang. He says Titus's mother is worried. Violet watches as Titus explains what happened and the father responds to his feed. He tells Titus the police will subpoena Titus's memories, and then leaves before answering Titus' question of when he can leave. Violet says her parents cannot come at all due to work.

Part 2, Eden: Missing the Feed; Cache & Carry; Night. And Boring; Father Analysis

Titus feels like a normal human being now. He only has his own real thoughts, and not the feed to guide him. His interactions are lessened since he cannot chat with others without the feed. His only form of communication is talking, and even then his father hardly listens to him. Thus, Titus is a real teenager.

Violet moves out of the role as the observer to pace and cry. She is visibly upset, thus leaving her stoic image. Yet as Titus's father comes to the hospital, she returns to her observer role. Titus knows he is being observed by her and is careful of what he says. Therefore, Violet represents a power over him, even though she is in the same position as him. Her power stems from her observation skills, and the fact that somehow, even



when she is just a normal human, she is still super human. At the end of the chapter, Violet says that her parents are not coming. This symbolizes that Violet is power onto herself. She does not need parents. She will get herself out of this situation, unlike the other teenagers who need their mothers and fathers.



Part 2, Eden: Salad days. w/ Sneeze Guard; The Garden; Dead Language; Release

Part 2, Eden: Salad days. w/ Sneeze Guard; The Garden; Dead Language; Release Summary

In Salad days. w/ Sneeze Guard, they are still in the hospital the next morning. It turns out to be one of the best days of Titus's life. They play a dart game with needles. The doctor comes in and yells at them for playing with needles. Titus enjoys being in the hospital with Violet. They reminisce about their childhoods when there was a trend to dress like elderly people in nursing homes. Violet says this day is fun and it is happy, like ranch dressing in salad.

In The Garden, Violet goes off to see the doctor. Violet comes back and leads Titus to another part of the hospital. Through a huge window, they see a dead garden. Vines lead up to the stars and Titus says it looks like a squid in love with the sky. Violet is impressed by his use of metaphor. They kiss.

In Dead Language, Marty ties himself with tubes to the bed and tries to stand up as a game. Violet and Titus discuss their families. Titus's dad is a banker, his mom is a designer and his little brother is a pain. Violet's father is a college professor who teaches dead computer programming languages. Violet shocks Titus because she can read and write. She writes an example of a dead language or Basic. Titus is in complete awe of her. Violet says she writes her observations all the time. Titus can barely read and does not know how to write. Titus asks why she does not use the feed and she says she is pretentious. Then Titus asks why her father cannot come to the hospital if he is a college professor. She says the work excuse is just a story she told him.

In Release, on Tuesday, the technician comes in and thanks Titus and his friends for their patience. They go into the exam room one by one. The doctor jolts Titus with a stick and his feed comes back after the second jolt. He hears chat and the feed. All of them hear the feed. Violet bursts with excitement for having the feed back. Titus hears the news, ads, a ball game and his little brother. Titus and Violet hold hands and dance.

Part 2, Eden: Salad days. w/ Sneeze Guard; The Garden; Dead Language; Release Analysis

Violet and Titus's relationship blossoms in the hospital. They are now way past the mixed up feelings of the Rumble Spot. The hospital symbolizes a peaceful, resting place for both Titus and Violet to figure out their emotions toward each other. Instead of



playing childish games with the others or frivolously hooking up like Link and Calista, the hospital allows them to get to know each other deeply. They talk and become friends first. Then when Violet shows Titus the garden, their emotions heighten and they feel comfortable enough to kiss.

The others see Violet as a super human in the novel, but the reader learns Violet is not a super human per se—she just understands simple human things such as reading and writing. They have been passed down to her from her college professor father. Here, Anderson makes social commentary on today's youth and how our society will eventually turn into an illiterate society due to all of the senseless, technological influence. Violet symbolizes the literate person who keeps society moving forward with her intelligence for reading and writing, and that is why the others see her as brilliant.

Violet is a mysterious figure. The fact her father does not come to the hospital foreshadows that he does not approve of Violet's feed, since he is a traditionalist who teaches reading and writing. Thus, Violet represents the struggle between the traditional human world and the human world of the feeds. She does not belong anywhere, and this foreshadows a potential struggle for identity.



Part 3, Utopia: Normal; Undervalued Truffle; The Others In Mal; Nudging

Part 3, Utopia: Normal; Undervalued Truffle; The Others In Mal; Nudging Summary

In Normal, things are back to normal for Titus since the hacking and the hospital.

He picks up Violet in his parents' upcar, or flying car, and they go to a party at Quendy's. Violet has never been to a real party before; she's only seen a party on her feed. She feels special that Titus takes her. Violet says to Titus that things will probably be different now because they went through a traumatic experience.

In Undervalued Truffle, Titus and Violet arrive at the party. Quendy says she is happy that he and Violet are a couple, but Calista says Violet is a snob. Titus chats with Violet and finds out Calista makes fun of Violet because she used a big vocabulary in their conversation. It is a normal party, like the hacking trauma never happened.

Then Titus's feed goes off. The President of the United States makes a speech shooting down rumors that the lesions are a result of activity of American industry. He says these rumors are untrue and that freedom does not create lesions.

In The Others In Mal, the party continues. Marty and Link try to convince him to go in mal, or malfunction. Titus says no and asks them if they do not remember the trauma that just happened to them. Marty and Link go in mal anyway. Violet notices Titus is disturbed. He lies and says he is disturbed that everyone forgets about the hacking trauma. Violet reveals that her feed is not completely right. Something went wrong and the doctors are still trying to repair the damage. Titus is shocked. She says it will be fine.

In Nudging, in the nights following the party, Titus has a recurring dream where he plays simple games, such as checkers. Someone nudges into his brain. It is not the police. The nudger gives Titus all of these games he wants. He thinks it is the hacker group, the Coalition of Pity. Awake, he can only remember the games part of his dream. He cannot remember until weeks later thinking it was the Coalition of Pity.

The feed has a poem. It is about primitive America. An America with normal cars, or downcars, rivers, countryside, etc. Now all the forests are gone. The poet misses this primitive America.



Part 3, Utopia: Normal; Undervalued Truffle; The Others In Mal; Nudging Analysis

Normalcy is finally restored in Titus's life. For once, he is happy with the mundane normalcy of it all. Before, he constantly complained about how boring everything was, but now he's fine with it. As Violet says they are changing after the hacking trauma, Titus' switch to accepting everyday, boring life symbolizes a change in his character, and possibly foreshadows a major change in the way he views life and the feed. He now thinks Marty and Link's games are childish. He has matured from his traumatic experience whereas Marty and Link have not.

Additionally, Calista thinks Violet is a snob for using a difficult vocabulary word. This represents a further separation from the rest of the friends as Violet and Titus stick to themselves, and are finding less in common with Titus' original friends. Therefore, this separation foreshadows a possible conflict between Violet and Titus and the other friends. A situation is brewing, especially for Titus, since he does not understand why no one else remembers the trauma they endured. It is only Violet he can turn to. And Violet is a traditionalist. The growing relationship between Titus and Violet foreshadows a possible strengthening of traditionalist values, and fighting against those who worship the feed.

The two feeds the reader sees, the president's message and the poem, also foreshadow a possible powder keg waiting to blow. The traditionalists, like Violet, are on the rise. The President warns against discriminating against those with lesions. It is becoming traditionalists versus the feed.



Part 3, Utopia: Lose the Chemise; Sniffing; A New Place; The Dimples of Delglacey

Part 3, Utopia: Lose the Chemise; Sniffing; A New Place; The Dimples of Delglacey Summary

In *Lose the Chemise*, Violet researches a big project. She says the corporations have figured out what everyone wants due to the feeds, but this makes everyone simpler. Her project is she creates a customer profile that is so confusing none of the corporations can market to it. She and Titus go from store to store and ask for confusing things, but do not purchase any of it. Titus asks her why her father did not come to the moon hospital. She says it is expensive to go to the moon and her father saved up a year to pay for her moon trip. Titus is shocked that traveling to the moon is expensive.

In *Sniffing*, Titus chats Violet after he goes to bed. Something is wrong with the way she chats. Her feed is all mixed-up, with interrupted and clipped messages from advertisers.

In *A New Place*, Titus says being around Violet is great. Everything is new to her, so she is like a little kid with excitement in every new experience. When she was growing up, her father said no to a lot of things normal kids do because they were too expensive or she was not allowed. Titus takes her to experience new things at the mall.

In *The Dimples of Delglacey*, Titus is back in School. School is not so bad. It is owned by the corporations, so the kids learn how to use their feeds, spot bargains, get a job and decorate their rooms. The corporations created School when the normal government schools were no longer funded and the schools were too dangerous. School is mostly easy, but sometimes it is hard for everyone.

Violet argues with Titus that America is not a democracy. It is a republic where people elect officials, but they do not have the right to decide. Titus gets annoyed. Violet says only 73 percent of Americans have feeds. She got her feed when she was seven years old. Before then, her parents did not want her to have a feed, and it is expensive to get one. Violet says she did not miss having a feed because she never knew what having one was. She says the feed creates a nation of idiots. She basically calls Titus an idiot and apologizes. He is hurt. He knows he is not smart.

At his parents' house, he mopes around because he thinks he is stupid. Violet is busy and cannot hang out. His mother says she and his father went to the genetics lab and ordered Titus to look like a forgotten television star, Delglacey, who was a beautiful man. They got just what they wanted. His parents say Titus is brave and he has been through a hard time, so they buy him an upcar. He is excited and happy to pick up Violet in his very own upcar. He does not feel stupid anymore.



The feed says the President called the Prime Minister of the Global Alliance an insulting name. But he meant it as a compliment. If the Global Alliance pulls out of America, it will be seen as a sign of ill will.

Part 3, Utopia: Lose the Chemise; Sniffling; A New Place; The Dimples of Delglacey Analysis

The reader now finds out more about Titus' financial situation. Apparently, he comes from a well-off family because he can afford everything easily and does not even know the prices of things. His parents buy him his own car on a whim. Meanwhile, Violet and her family struggle to pay for everything. Titus's friends are also wealthy. Therefore, besides her traditionalist values and intelligence, Violet is even more an outsider in their world.

Violet did not have a feed until six years of age. She has strong political opinions, which represent that of a traditionalist, or a conservative person politically. Violet symbolizes what America used to be. America used to have discipline, rules, and people made decisions for themselves. Now everything is left to the corporations who even own the School and have trademarked the name School. Anderson makes social commentary here, since the traditional, government schools got so bad, they were not maintainable. The corporations took over. The social commentary is that this exact thing will happen if Americans continue to lose their identities to technology, movies and television.



Part 3, Utopia: Lift; A Question of Moral; Observe the Remarkable Verdure; A Day in the Country

Part 3, Utopia: Lift; A Question of Moral; Observe the Remarkable Verdure; A Day in the Country Summary

In Lift, Titus goes car shopping with his father and Violet. Both Titus and Violet are excited. Violet says Titus is lucky because he gets this car as a reward for being brave. She tells him they do not have to go to court because the hacker died. Titus is surprised because he does not know this. Titus chooses the Dodge.

In A Question of Moral, Violet has dinner with Titus and his family at their house. Titus says Violet and he want to drive up to the forest tomorrow, but the father tells them the forest is gone for an air factory. Violet gets upset and says trees can make air and that people need trees. The father gets annoyed and says an air factory is more efficient. Titus changes the subject and says they will not have to go to court because the hacker died. The father says he knows and they plan to sue the nightclub. Violet's leg is asleep. Her body parts keep falling asleep after the hack.

In Observe the Remarkable Verdure, Titus goes to Violet's neighborhood to pick her up. It is poor and old-fashioned. The streets are regular streets for normal cars and they use the sun for weather, as opposed to how wealthy people, like Titus' family, who use their house's pod to control the seasons. Violet's house is poor and on the inside there is writing everywhere such as books, newspapers and posters. Violet's father speaks in very difficult sentences because he thinks the human race's vocabulary is being dummed down. Titus cannot understand what he says.

In A Day in the Country, Titus and Violet take a day trip to the countryside. Titus sees Violet's feed memory of her father lecturing his students and sees him as a great and important man. Violet is proud of him. Violet is obsessed with self-control. She orders something and waits days to get it and then savors the moment when she can unwrap it. This self-control description turns Titus on. As they drive back, she asks Titus how he wants to die. He answers that he wants his feed to go crazy and overload. Titus asks if Violet will kill him when it is his time to overload and die. She looks surprised and then assures him that she will. He drops her off and goes to his house. Titus's feed is a class lecture from Violet's father. It says they are in the age of dreams and getting everything they desire.



Part 3, Utopia: Lift; A Question of Moral; Observe the Remarkable Verdure; A Day in the Country Analysis

The class difference between Titus and Violet represent the two worlds that are about to clash: the world of the feed versus the world of the traditionalist. This class difference defines who people are and how they live. As Titus drives to Violet's neighborhood, he is shocked to see such old-fashioned things such streets for regular cars. He cannot fathom how she lives in this world. Yet somehow through these differences, Violet and Titus continue to fall in love. This love symbolizes a melding of both worlds into one, and that both ideologies can exist peacefully amongst one another.

As Violet's father's lecture says on the feed, this is an age of where people get exactly what they want as fast as they want. Violet's obsession with self-control proves this. Instead of instantly ordering things via her feed, she waits and has it shipped to her. Then she waits to open it. This self-control demonstrates a society that is dying. This is Anderson's social commentary on how patience dies, and how the newer generation is always obsessed with instant gratification. However, this idea of instant gratification also goes along with being a normal teenager. It is the idea of how the younger generations are always inferior to the older ones. Though the world of the feed is vastly different, there are some things that remain universal such as the generation theory and shopping for cars with your father.



Part 3, Utopia: Nudging Again; The Real Thing; Fight and Flight; So Much To Do

Part 3, Utopia: Nudging Again; The Real Thing; Fight and Flight; So Much To Do Summary

In Nudging Again, Titus has strange nightmares. He is in a foreign place, seeing riots and fields of black. A kid looks at him. A gun points at him. It all makes no sense. Then Violet wakes him up. She says an intruder pokes around in her feed. She tries to call FeedTech, but she gets an automated computer. She gets angry and hangs up. Violet asks Titus if he can feel the intruder in his feed dreams. Titus asks who the intruder is, but Violet does not know. Titus goes back to sleep and dreams normally. The feed seems normal.

In The Real Thing, everyone except Titus and Violet come to the party dressed in riot clothing from the Watts Riots or Kent State Riots. It's a trend suddenly, which is parallel to Titus' nightmare. Violet uses a difficult vocabulary word and Calista and Loga insult her. Violet wants to go home, but Titus wants to stay. But Titus relents. Titus and Violet are about to have a fight.

In Fight and Flight, Titus and Violet argue. He is mad because he thinks she can act like a snob at times. She is mad because his friends were making fun of her. She is near tears and confesses that she is starting to malfunction to the point of paralysis and organ failure. Titus asks if they can turn her feed off, like the doctor did. She says no. The doctor just disconnected the feed; he didn't turn it off completely. Titus does not know what to say. Violet asks for Titus to drop the upcar so she can feel something. He does and they both get sweaty and nauseous. They are somewhere over Nebraska. Violet says they can go back to his friends, but he says no. They head back to his house with his hand holding hers.

In So Much To Do, Titus and Violet watch shows on the feed at his house. Violet says there is so much of the world she wants to see. They hold onto to each other. Titus feels like he has just had sex with her. His mother and Smell Factor come home and Titus and Violet pull apart. They have dinner without his father and it goes well. When Titus drops Violet off at her house, he asks how long it will be until she dies. She says it will be soon, but she does not know exactly when. He drops her off, without making plans. The feed has a show about a boy who lost his dog. He waits for the dog to come back, but the father says the dog was not a super dog with super powers. It is just a regular dog, and the boy will see this with time.



Part 3, Utopia: Nudging Again; The Real Thing; Fight and Flight; So Much To Do Analysis

The riot dream foreshadows an impending conflict. It is apparent someone or something causes the feeds of these teenagers to be disrupted. There is an obvious mastermind causing havoc with the feeds of the young people. However, they are not fully aware of what is happening and give into the subliminal messages through their dreams. This is social commentary on how the young people of today do the same thing. They do not think for themselves. Instead, they do what advertisements, technology and media tells them to do. In essence, the young people of America are brainwashed like those in this novel.

Violet's impending death symbolizes the death of the traditionalist culture. If she dies, there is no one to carry on these traditions among the young people. They will die, and the teenagers will fully submit to the feed. Titus's friends still submit to the feed fully, despite the hacker trauma. However, due to Violet, Titus starts to see the errors of the feed. He moves further and further away from his friends, and closer to traditionalist Violet. Thus, Titus is on a journey of self-exploration to find out who he is both with the feed and without the feed.

Specifically in *So Much To Do*, the feed has a show about a boy who lost his dog. This show symbolizes the relationship between Titus and Violet. The boy loses the dog as Titus is about to lose Violet. The boy must realize that the dog is just a dog as Titus must realize Violet is just a girl. The reader now begins to see that the feed also taps into the deep emotions of the person.



Part 3, Utopia: Seashore; Limbo in Prayer; Flat Hope; Our Duty to the Party

Part 3, Utopia: Seashore; Limbo in Prayer; Flat Hope; Our Duty to the Party Summary

In Seashore, Titus and Violet go to the sea. Titus says Violet should not worry because science discovers things all the time. Violet responds everything is dead or dying. Violet agrees with the hacker and she admits it is ironic. She says her body keeps becoming paralyzed. It happens more often. And her feed is not working properly. Titus says that can be fixed. She replies she does not know. Titus says he really likes her and Violet hits him on the back of the head and says that is enough. The feed tunes into a show that keeps repeatedly asking, "Have you given it to her?" (p. 182).

In Limbo in Prayer, Titus goes to school. Calista has a huge fake lesion on the back of her neck, since lesions are trendy now. Quendy is still mad Calista and Link are an item. Quendy says she likes Violet, but alludes to the fact she is a bit snobbish. Titus gets Violet on the feed and tells her about Calista's lesion. Violet is disgusted. Violet admits she thought Link was hot when she first met him. Titus is shocked because Link is very ugly. But Violet says that Titus and his other friends are so beautiful that Link is different. But once Link opened his mouth, the attraction stopped. Titus tells Violet that Link is actually a genetic clone of Abraham Lincoln. Link's family is very rich and could afford to make this clone. Unfortunately, Link is stupid though. Violet at home studies the Mayan culture. Titus says there is a party on Friday night and Violet should come, but Violet says his friends hate her. He says no and she agrees to come. The feed is tuned into sexual advertisements, such as how to please a man in bed. Another message on the feed is a political message about doling out foreign aid.

In Flat Hope, Titus and Violet are at Link's party. Quendy shows up with expensive cuts or special types of lesions all over her body. Everyone is shocked. But Quendy says they are trendy and she is happy. Violet gets sad and talks about the decline of the civilization again. To cheer her up, Titus brings her up to Link's attic, which is full of old stuff. He says they used to play a game when they were little. Link and his best friends would hide up there, while his other friends tried to find them in the house. The house would always become quiet and Titus would feel alone. Then he realized that everyone would listen to his footsteps and every move, so in the end, he was not alone. Violet says she agrees, but Titus does not know what she means.

In Our Duty to the Party, Titus and Violet go downstairs, past people in mal in the bedrooms. They join a game of spin the bottle. Titus is nervous because he knows Violet does not want to play. Marty spins Violet. Violet goes completely white and shakes. She screams and convulses. She says they play games, but their skin falls off. She says nonsensical things like they are the feed and look at what they have done to themselves. She calls Quendy a monster. Titus tries to stop her. He cries and tells them



to call an ambulance. They say no, that if Violet is in mal, they will all get in trouble. Titus insists they call an ambulance. Women come and take Violet into an ambulance. Titus is there beside her with malpractice ads running on his feed. He thinks the party is officially over.

Part 3, Utopia: Seashore; Limbo in Prayer; Flat Hope; Our Duty to the Party Analysis

The lesions that Calista and Quendy have symbolize today's tattoos or body piercings that teenagers get because they think they are trendy or to rebel. At the time, teenagers do not realize how ridiculous they look, but they are sucked into the trend. Titus' friends are also obsessed with trends and cannot get away from them. They try to out-trend each other, especially the girls, such as today's teenagers do. This is social commentary on how teenagers are brainwashed by media trends and how they cannot think as unique individuals.

The idea of sex creeps up in the novel. Violet and Titus only kiss on page, but Titus thinks about sex and if they will have sex before she dies. Anderson handles Titus' sexual thoughts with class and extreme care, since this is a young adult novel. As an author, he cannot have overt sexual scenes because he must keep to the confines of the genre. This type of handling of sex can be found in today's other young adult novels such as the Twilight series. Young adult authors usually allude to sex, instead of having mature sexual scenes as seen novels for adults.

Titus's story of the attic symbolizes what Violet is going through. That is why she agrees, but Titus does not understand. Titus felt alone hiding in the attic as a child as Violet feels alone in her impending death. Titus then realized he was not alone because people were searching for him. The moment he realized he was alone, he did not feel alone anymore. Violet feels alone as well, but then she realizes Titus is there for her. In the end, she will not die alone.

As the reader moves on to Part 4, s/he sees that as Titus says, the party is really over. In Part 4, Anderson sets the reader up for a death and full collapse of Titus's life as he knows it.



Part 4, Slumberland: 52.9%; 87.3%; 87.1%; 87.1%; 86.5%; 52.0%; 82.4%

Part 4, Slumberland: 52.9%; 87.3%; 87.1%; 87.1%; 86.5%; 52.0%; 82.4% Summary

In 52.9%, Titus is in the waiting room at the hospital. The nurse comes and says there are delays; the doctor will talk to him once he leaves Violet and that Titus should get some rest. A woman in the chair next to Titus tries to tell him a story. Titus sees other patients being wheeled down the hallway, paces and waits.

In 87.3%, Violet's father arrives at the hospital. He is distressed and speaks simply. He goes into see Violet and talk with the doctor. He tells Titus to check Violet's feed efficiency, which should be at 98 percent. However, it is only at 87.3 percent. Titus does not tell Violet's father the bad news. He simply looks at him and Violet's father knows the feed efficiency is way off. Titus struggles with the fact Violet called Quendy a monster. He thinks she only did it because her feed was malfunctioning. Titus goes into Violet's room. She sits in a floating chair with a lot of cables. She says sorry for what she said to Quendy, but Titus does not reply. Violet says she is okay for a little while. She wants to say more to Titus, but she cannot. She is near tears and cannot move her kneecap. Titus says nothing and leaves. At home, Titus tries to take his mind off Violet, but he cannot. He dreams that Violet says she needs to him to talk to her.

In 87.1%, Titus goes to Violet's house the next day. They chat, or speak telepathically through the feed. Violet says she lost a year of memories, the year before she got the feed at seven. Titus sees she looks sick. Violet assures Titus they are still together and will remain together. She says she wants to live life. She wants to dance, go to the zoo, run down a beach, etc. Then she realizes these are all openings of sitcoms. She questions what is she without the feed? Titus asks her what it was like to have the seizure at Link's party and scream at everyone. She says it felt great, but like she was in hell.

In 87.1%, Violet's father and her cannot afford her feed repairs. Medical insurance does not cover feed problems. Titus listens as Violet's father and Violet compose a message to beg the corporation for free repairs. They state their case as it is a little girl's life at stake. Violet's feed warranty expired years ago. They send the message.

In 86.5%, Quendy and Titus talk the next day. She realizes that Violet did not mean the things she said. She asks how Violet is and Titus tells her. Quendy sends Titus a site to understand what is happening to Violet's limbic system. He does not seem to care. Quendy gets a little angry and says it is not about him or Quendy. This is happening to Violet and he needs to stop sulking and be there for her.



In 52.0%, Titus listens to a message on the feed from Violet. She has not heard anything about her free repairs request. She says her mom never had the feed and her father was too poor to get the feed until later life. Her mother and father both went to college without the feed. They conceived Violet in a test tube. Her mother and she would walk through the mall, and her mother would point out people wearing plastic. Violet says she could not move her leg for an hour and half today, but she can now. She says everyone has one time on Earth and she describes a typical afternoon with artificial sun.

In 82.4%, Titus listens to the message on the way to School. He smells the hospital and Violet. He sits in his car and waits as the leaves turn red to signal his lateness. He sits there in a trance.

Part 4, Slumberland: 52.9%; 87.3%; 87.1%; 87.1%; 86.5%; 52.0%; 82.4% Analysis

Titus struggles with his feelings toward Violet. He does not know how to handle this situation. On one hand, he is not happy with her for the mean things she said during her seizure. On the other hand, he cares about her and cannot stop thinking about her. Yet he pulls away from Violet during a time she needs him most. This reaction is a typical one of a teenage boy who does not know how to deal with his emotions. The feed also disrupts his emotions, since it dominates his brain. Titus continues his self journey as he begins to realize he cannot leave Violet in this situation alone. Thus, Titus symbolizes a typical teenager overwhelmed with emotion. Even the feed cannot override having the unstable emotions of a teenager.

Anderson provides more social commentary here because Violet and her father cannot afford her feed repairs. Her medical insurance does not cover it. This alludes to the current health care situation in the US today, and how many families struggle financially and health-wise because their insurance does not cover everything. Additionally, when Violet says that her perfect day is like a sitcom, the reader realizes that so is her/his day. As a society, we are also fed images of what perfection is, just as the characters are fed images in the novel. If we dissect our idea of a perfect day, it would probably sound a lot like a television show too. Anderson makes social commentary here on how as a society, we are affected by the constant technology, media and advertisements that bombard society. Anderson seems to say, how different are we from the people in this book?



Part 4, Slumberland: 80.9%; 78.6%; 77.8%; 76.3%; 76.2%; 76.2%; 59.3%

Part 4, Slumberland: 80.9%; 78.6%; 77.8%; 76.3%; 76.2%; 76.2%; 59.3% Summary

In 80.9%, Violet sends her list of things she wants to do via the feed. She wants to do things like go to the mountains and stay in a hotel with Titus. She wants to dance and go under the sea. She wants to have children and grandchildren and tell them about her homosexual ancestor who fled Germany in World War II. She wants to not remember the hours of being in the hospital, being sick and Titus only coming to see her to feel like a good person.

In 78.6%, Titus is in school, staring at a hologram for a teacher. Due to budget cuts, alive teachers were cut and holograms teach instead. He reads Violet's list in fragments. He stares at the back of a girl's sweater. He says the hologram looks like an empty shell.

In 77.8%, Violet chats Titus and asks if he received her list.

In 76.3%, after School, Titus hangs out with Marty and Link. Link asks about Violet, but Titus does not want to talk about it. Titus wants to go in mal, so they download it from a site and all go in mal. Going "in mal" is like taking a euphoric, hard drug, such as LSD. It is completely illegal. They get very high and go to the mall. They do not know how they got there. A shopkeeper realizes they are in mal and kicks them out. Violet chats Titus, but he does not respond. Titus tells Link and Marty about the list and they say it is intense. Finally, Titus answers Violet's chat. Violet says 1500 people in the Gulf of Mexico have just been found dead in mal. Titus flies on autopilot to Violet's house, despite her protests. His feed says the American corporations must be dismantled to restore Earth's integrity. Titus says they can do her whole list in five days. Violet says her father stopped teaching her. There is no point because she is dying. Titus puts his face to the ground and falls asleep.

In 76.2%, Violet sends her memory from this morning to Titus via the feed. Titus goes into the memory as Violet. In the memory, Violet loses feeling in her legs and falls down the stairs. Nina appears, Violet's FeedTech customer service representative. She informs Violet in a very cold way that the corporation has turned down her request for free repairs. And that the corporation tried to interest other corporations, but because of Violet's research project where she bookmarked purchases and never bought anything, every corporation turned down her request. Violet sobs. Then Nina says Violet can look for great bargains over the next six months and if she purchases things, she may try again for her free repairs request. Titus feels Violet's brain hurting.



In 76.2%, Titus wakes up with a headache. He feels terrible and vows never to go in mal again. Violet's father is not happy that she spends her last days with a boy who is in mal. She talks about music. Titus waits for her to bring up her fears, but she does not. He wants to reach out and touch her, but he does not. Neither does she touch him. He leaves. The next day, Violet loses feeling in her arms and is given a sedative.

In 59.3%, Violet sends Titus a huge message about how scared she is. She keeps losing her memories, so she bombards Titus with her memories for safekeeping. The bombard is too much for Titus' feed and for him emotionally. He does not read the memories. He is overwhelmed and a bit annoyed. He gets a headache. He deletes all her memories. Violet chats him about the weekend plan to do her list. Titus has no idea what she is talking about, so he does not answer her. He tries to sleep that night but cannot.

Part 4, Slumberland: 80.9%; 78.6%; 77.8%; 76.3%; 76.2%; 76.2%; 59.3% Analysis

Titus continues the role of the confused, teenage boy. He is overwhelmed by Violet's clinginess, and does not know how to respond to this intense relationship. It is something he has never experienced before. The more clingy Violet becomes, the more he pulls away, just like a normal, teenage boy. He cannot handle all the intensity, especially since her memories now flood his feed. Titus does a cold thing and erases all the memories. He also does not call her back about the weekend. This situation symbolizes a normal teenage relationship and how emotions are heightened. The boy does not call the girl back and it is the end of the world. In Violet's case, this is very literal.

Titus tries to escape his emotion by going in mal. However, he can still hear Violet on the feed. Yet when he is in the euphoric state in mal, he promises her they will do everything on her list. This is when Titus opens up his emotions the most and his true feelings come to the surface. He speaks freely. When he is not in mal anymore, he reverts to a cold, uncaring boy. Titus now must decide whether he wants to be there for Violet as she dies, or he wants to remain uncaring and ignore her completely.



Part 4, Slumberland: 57.2%; 54.1%; 51.5%, Summertime; The Deep; 4.6%; 4.6%

Part 4, Slumberland: 57.2%; 54.1%; 51.5%, Summertime; The Deep; 4.6%; 4.6% Summary

In 57.2%, Smell Factor is upset because their father has not come home in three weeks. He runs around the house broadcasting annoying, kids' show beams. Titus retreats to his room. To his surprise, Violet comes over. She asks if he has not received any memories or messages. He lies and says he never received anything. She gets upset because she thinks her chat malfunctions as well as her body. Titus feels guilty about lying. She asks if he wants to go to the mountains with her. He says he has plans. She gets angry. He feels guilty about lying about her chat and he agrees to go. Violet is excited and happy. Titus lies to his mother and says they are going to a concert and then he will sleep over Violet's house. In the upcar, Violet says the corporation reads all the music she listens to lately, and they demographically profile her. She likes their suggestions. She does not know how to resist anymore. Titus says to keep doing.

In 54.1%, Titus and Violet go to a college, mountain town. They eat pizza. There is a protest going on, but no one in the pizza shop knows what it is about. Titus does not want to be on this vacation at all. He tries to play along as they check in the hotel. Violet says she wants to have sex and that she loves him. She tries to get him excited, but he cannot. He likens her attempts to being felt up by a zombie. She gets insulted. They have a major fight. She confesses she originally went to the moon to feel normal. When she met him, she felt like a normal girl with a normal, beautiful boyfriend. He says he cannot be with her anymore. He says her dying is too intense for him. He originally wanted to go out with her for a couple months and that was it. He says she only dates him to feel normal and make fun of how stupid he and his friends are. He says he feels like they are married. She says the Global Alliance is about to attack the United States because the planet implodes and nothing can live here anymore. He does not want to hear it. He pays for the room and they leave. As he drops Violet off at home, her arm paralyzes. He tries to help her, as does her father, but she does not want their help. Titus leaves, only to realize months later that is his last spoken interaction with Violet and all she says is "Oh shit" (p. 275).

In 51.5%, Violet messages Titus. She says she loves him and he is not stupid. People can learn from him. She said they both said mean things and she hopes they can talk. She says there is enough time to change until there is no time anymore. Titus quickly hears the message and then goes back to playing basketball with Link.

In Summertime, after School ends, Titus, Link and Marty visits one of Jupiter's moons. Titus is going out with Quendy. Titus reverts to his frivolous, teenage ways. Marty gets a



Nike tattoo that makes him say Nike in every sentence. Everyone thinks it is hilarious. But then everyone's hair starts to fall out and their skin starts to fall off. It is Nostalgia Feedback. People get nostalgic for fashions that are closer to their own time. Then people become nostalgic for the moment they are living in and they freeze. After Titus sees Calista and Loga frozen, he cannot sleep and thinks about Violet's frozen hand. That summer, Titus' upcar is not cool anymore and his friends do not want to ride in it. Titus feels no matter what he does, he cannot catch up to the trend of the moment.

In *The Deep*, Titus's father comes home from a whaling trip with his colleagues. He feeds the memory into the feed for his family. He tells about the trip. As he does, Titus gets messages from Violet's father, who says she is near death and he can come over if he chooses. Violet's father messages Titus their address in case he has forgotten it. In the whaling memory, there is a beautiful woman colleague. Titus's father stops the memory short. Smell Factor says the woman makes him feel funny. The mother asks who she is in an accusing voice. Titus says he is going to Violet's and leaves. Violet's father is there and Titus goes into her room to see her.

In 4.6%, Titus sees Violet as a basic corpse. She does not move. Her father explains that he never wanted his daughter to have the feed, but he went for a job interview and was up against candidates who had the feed. He did not get the job. He realized then that to succeed in life, she must have the feed. He implanted a cheap feed in her at seven. This was a dangerous thing to do. Violet's father gets angry at Titus and yells at him for the way he treated Violet as she was dying. Violet's father makes Titus see his last memories of her. She is a prisoner in her own body. She is trapped. She goes to the bathroom all over herself and the father cleans her. Titus sees all this. Her father says Titus disposed of her the way his generation disposes of everything. They use everything once and then order something else. Disturbed, Titus goes home, strips naked and orders pants all night long. He feels the orders being processed and shipped in his head. He uses up all his credit. He watches the sun rise.

In 4.6%, Titus visits Violet again. He dresses up. He has an hour before he meets Quendy. He tells a brain dead Violet about historical facts and stories one sentence at a time. He ignores the feed going off in his head. He also tells her of political news of how the Global Alliance may go to total war with America and how there are riots all over. He cries and tells her the story of them. It is a story of two teenagers who fall in love and learn to resist the feed. The feed has an advertisement of a jeans sale and keeps repeating the sentence "Everything must go" until it is in small font.

Part 4, Slumberland: 57.2%; 54.1%; 51.5%, Summertime; The Deep; 4.6%; 4.6% Analysis

Titus's self journey goes backwards as he and Violet are on the path to breaking up. He reverts to his old ways of not thinking and not caring. Once they break up, he goes back to his group of friends and does stupid, immature things. He dates Quendy, a vapid girl who lives and dies by the feed. But as the reader is let down by thinking Titus's self journey will end as a selfish, brainwashed kid, he does the right thing. He goes to Violet



and tells her stories. He emotes. This is the turning point where Titus's self journey is complete. He is no longer an immature kid who worships the feed. Instead, he resists the feed and tells her stories. He now thinks and pays attention to the world around him.

Violet's death symbolizes the death of the traditional, literate civilization. With Violet, vocabulary, reading and writing stay alive. When she dies, this all dies along with her. As her death happens, so does the slow death of the feed. The Nostalgia Feedback invades everyone's feed and causes them to lose their hair and skin. It literally eats away at them. To those who live and die by feed trends, such as Calista and Loga, the feed freezes them and puts them in the same frozen state as Violet. But their state is only temporary, while Violet's condition is forever. Slowly, the feed continues to corrupt people's brains, and as a society, people just accept what happens to them.

In the end, M.T. Anderson provides social commentary on how our society has become not only more illiterate, but the young people lose the ability to think for themselves. Media, technology and advertisements corrupt the youth of America. They cannot keep up with the trends. This thirst for anything new and cool lessens the youth and makes them lazy, dull and unintelligent. This novel makes the reader think about how society could turn out like the youth in the novel, and how media and illiteracy can lead to a lesser society.



Characters

Titus

Titus is the narrator of the novel. He is a teenager who has a feed, or transmitter implanted into his brain. He is from a wealthy family and can easily afford to take trips to the moon. He parties with his friends like a normal teenager and engages in forbidden activities such as drinking and horseplay. The feed dominates his life, as it does with every teenager in the novel, and the feed controls his mind completely. When Titus thinks about something or wants something, the feed will send out advertisements, media announcements and shows to him. He and his friends decide what is trendy by the feed. As the novel begins, Titus is a typical, immature teenager living a normal life. He is bored by everything, which is also very normal for a teenager.

As the book progresses, Titus meets his love interest, Violet. Her traditionalist influence rubs off on him and he starts to have deep emotions for her. He starts to rethink the way he thinks about the feed and how silly his friends seem. This self journey and a traumatic experience with a hacker turns Titus into a mature, thoughtful person. Titus is also beautiful, as his parents genetically modeled him from the physical features of a television star. He is also not smart, since his parents did not model him with intelligence. Due to dealing with Violet's impending death, he begins to have insightful thoughts and becomes even more mature. He falls in love with Violet and cares for her deeply.

Violet

Violet is the girl that Titus meets at the Ricochet Club on the moon. She is the most beautiful girl he has ever seen. He is instantly attracted to her. She is dressed in gray wool, which is an old-fashioned outfit. She is an observer. She comes from a poor family and lives a traditionalist or old-fashioned lifestyle, due to her college professor father's influence. The father believes people are becoming stupid and simple because of the feed. So does Violet. Violet is rare because she has experienced life without the feed. She did not have the feed implanted into her head until she was seven years old. So she knows how to read and write, which Titus and his friends hardly know how to do.

Violet is extremely intelligent. She is homeschooled and studies constantly about all different kinds of knowledge. Violet obsesses over the fact that the feed turns everyone into mindless idiots. She wants to change this and does a project to confuse the feed. Due to the hacker trauma, she is slowly dying. She becomes paralyzed at times and must face her impending death with Titus at her side. Violet has not experienced a lot of the world, as opposed to Titus and his friends, due to her family's financial situation. Her mother lives in South America. She left when Violet was young. Violet holds on to her father's idea of the feed and tries to fight the feed in the only ways she can.



Link

Link is Titus's friend. He is ugly, tall and very rich. His feed signal attracts other people, so everyone wants to be friends with him.

Marty

Marty is Titus's friend. He is good at everything.

Calista

Calista is Titus's friend. She is blond, beautiful and comes off as very important to others. She can usually get into bars due to all these traits, despite the fact, she is a teenager.

Loga

Loga is Titus's ex-girlfriend. Originally, she didn't want to talk to Titus after their breakup, but they are friends now.

Steve, Titus' Father

Steve, Titus's father, is a businessman. He checks on Titus in the hospital, but does not give him any answers as to when he can leave the hospital.

Quendy

Quendy is usually second fiddle to Calista's beauty and charm, and she knows it. Quendy worries about a huge lesion on her forehead, but then learns to embrace lesions.

Old Man

The old man hacks into Titus and his friends' feeds, causing them to get their feeds shut off and a stay in the hospital.

Smell Factor

Smell Factor is Titus's six-year-old brother. He likes to play with toy birds, plays baseball and is coddled by the mother.

Violet's Father

Violet's father is a college professor. He is a traditionalist who reads, writes and studies dead languages. He is what humans used to be without the feed. He speaks in very complicated sentences with difficult vocabulary that no one can understand.



Objects/Places

Unettes

Unettes is a space, slang term for girls.

Upcar

An upcar is a flying car that transports characters in the novel from place to place.

Bonesprocket

A bonesprocket is a derogatory word for a kill joy, or someone who does not partake in the fun around her/him.

Feed

A feed is a transmitter implanted in the characters' brains.

Ricochet Lounge

The Ricochet Lounge is a nightclub on the moon where party goers wear space suits and crash into each other due to the no gravity and low gravity atmosphere.

Unit

Unit is a space, slang term for dude or man, a.k.a. a friendly greeting among teenagers.

Cro-Magnon

Cro-Magnon is prehistoric man.

Feednet

A feednet is a feed network that allows those with feeds to listen to their feeds and chat, or telepathically speak amongst one another.



Weatherbee & Crotch

Weatherbee & Crotch is a clothing store that comes on Titus's feed. It is a satirical name for the real clothing store Abercrombie & Fitch, which is popular among American teenagers.

In mal

In mal is when a person with a feed is in malfunction. In other words, when the feed is not working properly. It is illegal to go in mal, much like doing an illegal drug.

Oh? Wow! Thing!

Oh? Wow! Thing! is a show the teenagers like to watch on their feed.

Themes

Boredom

Titus complains of boredom as the novel opens. He thinks the moon is boring and Mars is boring. Like a typical teenager, everything is boring. Even the feed constantly running through his head is boring. Then he meets Violet and she is the opposite of boredom. The way she can push juice out of her mouth and make it float in front of her is not boring. The way she dresses, in an old-fashioned, gray wool outfit is interesting. Titus is instantly attracted to Violet because she is not the norm. He is struck by her traditionalist ways, and Violet starts to consume him instead of the feed. He becomes less bored.

When they are in the hospital, they must keep from being bored at all costs, especially since the feed is shut off. They play with hypodermic needles, make a mess out of the hospital ward and even one boy ties himself to the bed and tries to stand up. Everything is a game. Everything is done with the mission to not be bored.

Later in the novel, Titus's friends who live and die by the feed are always bored and invent new things to amuse themselves. The boys are constantly inventing silly games to keep themselves occupied. The girls change hairstyles several times a day to keep from being bored. They also shop for trendy clothes, and change their look constantly to stay exciting. In fact, they are so bored at times, they go in mal, or malfunction, which is a forbidden action, or in other words, used like an illegal drug. Their boredom continues to a party at Link's house. They decide to immerse themselves in a very immature game of spin the bottle just to be entertained.

Technology Ruins America's Youth

M.T. Anderson provides a host of social commentary for this novel. One major theme is how technology, including media and advertising, ruins America's youth. Since the feed is in the teenagers' head, they live and die by the feed. Everything they want is instantaneous. They no longer have a reason to think as individuals and increase their intelligence. Instead, they are content with having technology do everything for them. They cannot even read or write because everything they need is done by the feed. In School, teenagers learn about the feed, how to find the best bargains, how to get a job and how to decorate their rooms. Regular subjects such as literature and math are not in School. Thus, the feed or technology ruins America's youth by dumbing them down.

The constant advertisements running through their heads also ruin the youth. Instead of thinking and deciding for themselves, the feed decides what they should buy, how to dress, what trends to follow, what shows to watch and what music to listen to. The feed is controlled by corporate America. School is also run by corporate America. Therefore, it is the corporations who control the youth. In addition, parents genetically create their



children to be perfect, beautiful specimens in regard to physical appearance. Intelligence is not a priority because the feed controls their brains anyway. There is no need for intelligence in this world. It is only Violet, a girl who once lived without the feed, who understands what intelligence and thinking mean and how dangerous it is that the feed controls everyone's mind. But she is a rarity because the feed controls most of America's youth, thus ruining them.

Journey of Self-Exploration

As the novel begins, Titus is a normal teenager. The feed controls him as it does his friends. He does immature things such as horseplay and giving into the whims of his unintelligent friends. He thinks everything is boring, even trips to the moon and Mars. He is a vapid character who cannot think for himself. Instead, he lets the feed think for him. However, when he meets Violet, who is a traditionalist, he begins to think. Violet makes him think about things he otherwise never would. Instead of the feed choosing everything for him, he starts to go on a self-journey. He realizes there is more to life than the feed due to Violet. She can read, write and sew—all things a normal human without a feed can do. He is fascinated by this and delves into her world.

He begins to discover other things besides the feed, such as books, writing, different neighborhoods and landscapes. He sees the world as more than the feed. He feels in love and he has deep emotions for Violet. He discovers new words as Violet has an extensive vocabulary. When a traumatic event happens to both of them, both he and Violet are changed, while his friends remain immature and silly. He sees his friends as silly and pulls away from their world. Instead, he is more and more attracted to Violet's world and becomes more mature. He continues his journey of self-exploration as he begins to think about the feed for what it is, and not just blindly accept everything the feed tells him. This is all eventual preparation for Titus's completed journey of learning to resist the feed.

Style

Point of View

The novel is told from a first person point of view. Titus, the narrator of the novel, gives the reader a close, first person point of view. Titus gives the reader access to his most private thoughts, including those he does not even share telepathically with Violet or his friends. Titus provides details similar to those of a normal teenager. He relays observations and details about his surroundings from a teenager perspective. In other words, through Titus's first person point of view, the reader receives descriptions of things that Titus notices as being "cool" or interesting. For example, when he meets Violet, she can push juice out of her mouth and suspend it in midair. Those are the type of details Titus provides, whether they are about a juice trick, trendy clothing, nightclubbing or horseplay with his friends. Thus, the point of view is adolescent and tends to lack any sort of depth or maturity until Titus goes through a trauma, and then finds out Violet is sick.

The story is told through exposition and dialogue. Titus gives descriptions of places and people, but he also has a lot dialogue. Some of the dialogue is actual speaking. The rest of the dialogue is chat, or a telepathic way Titus communicates with his friends. Both forms of dialogue read the same, but chat is in italics.

The reader also gets access to the feed in Titus's brain. However, the feed is from a third person point of view. When the readers see the feed, it is a garble of advertisements, feed shows, radio, music and political news. The third person of the feed allows the reader to get a full perspective of the world in which Titus lives, and sheds light on what happens in the actual world, besides what happens in Titus's teenage microcosm.

Setting

The novel is set in somewhere in the United States a hundred or so years in the future. Titus mentions flying his upcar over Nebraska, but the reader is not told exactly where he lives in the US. At the beginning of the novel, Titus and his friends party on the moon. They go to a no gravity/low gravity nightclub and bounce around. After the hack, they are in a moon hospital. It is similar to a regular hospital and has more gravity. After they leave the hospital, they return to Earth. For Titus and his friends, their homes are all very upscale, since they come from wealthy families. Each of their homes is situated inside a pod. The pod controls the seasons. Inside their homes, it is normal. Their houses have utensils for eating, dishes, furniture and attics.

Titus travels to Violet's neighborhood and house. It is poor. It has regular streets for when cars were down on the ground. It does not have pods to control the seasons. Inside Violet's house, he is shocked by how much writing he sees. There are



newspapers, books and posters with writing on the walls. Since the feed, writing and reading is primitive. Violet's house is a representation of the old world, as the reader knows it.

On Earth, forests are cut down for air factories. There are virtually no trees. When Titus and Violet visit a farm, it is a maze of meat, but they do enjoy eating donuts. Therefore, some parts of Earth are completely the same, while others are drastically different.

Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is very informal. Since it is written from a teenager's point of view, there is a lot of slang. However, the slang is a futurist slang the author invents. For example, instead of saying, "dude" or "man," Titus and his friends say "unit" to each other. There is also a good amount of swearing from Titus and his friends. However, the interesting part is that Titus's father also speaks like one of the kids, as he swears and uses their slang. The language is very simple. Since the feed controls everything and most people are illiterate, the language they speak is very simple and without frills. Due to the feed, no one has extensive vocabulary except for Violet and her father, who study language. They use extensive vocabulary words, especially the father, and are shunned for doing so.

Descriptions are not extensive, but they come in necessary places. Descriptions of the moon and Earth are necessary because otherwise the reader will not understand. Description creates this futuristic world for the reader to inhabit. Strange behaviors are also described, such as Violet's juice trick, or when Titus and his friends are hacked into.

The most interesting part of the language in this novel is it is very reminiscent of J.D. Salinger's masterpiece, *The Catcher in the Rye*. Titus's voice is almost identical to the voice of Holden Caulfield, especially when Titus says everything is boring all the time, which is similar to Holden saying everything is lousy all the time. Perhaps J.D. Salinger's writing rubbed off on M.T. Anderson because Titus seems like a futuristic version of Holden.

Structure

This novel is comprised of four parts. Each part has a name, which displays the overall theme for each part. Chapter length varies from one page to approximately twelve pages long. Each chapter is not numbered. Instead, each chapter has a name alluding to an event that happens within the chapter. The chapters have short paragraphs with minimal description. The book has a very certain timeline. It follows Titus's life day by day, and only short spans of a few days or so to move time along. The reader knows exactly where s/he is in the timeline.

The plot of the novel is simple and without subplots. The novel is about Titus's life as a teenager on Earth and how he lives and dies by the feed until he meets Violet. Violet

makes him think differently about the feed, and they must grapple with her impending death.

The novel's pace is normal and moves moderately. It is neither fast-paced or slow. It is the right speed for a modern day, young adult reader. It is a very easy read with some difficult vocabulary interspersed throughout the story. There are swearing and slang terms. When the reader sees the feed, it is always on a separate page, at the end of the chapter and with bullets and italics. The plot engrosses the reader into this world of the feed and futuristic Earth. Back story is virtually nonexistent except for a few explanations of the characters' childhoods. The novel is a relatively easy read and entertains as a whole.



Quotes

"You need the noise of your friends, in space."
Part 1, Moon: Your Face Is Not an Organ, p. 4

"The Rumble Spot: an ocean of chaos in the Sea of Tranquility."
Part 1, Moon: The Nose Grid, p. 27

"And the feed was pouring in on us now, all of it, all of the feednet, and we could feel all of our favorites."
Part 2, Eden: Release, p. 70

"It makes good times even better when you know they're going to end."
Part 3, Eden: A Day in the Country, pp. 145-6

"I want to go out and see the world. There's so much. There's ... just so much."
Part 3, Eden: So Much To Do, p. 175

"You toss something up in the air, and you expect it to come back down again."
Part 3, Eden: So Much To Do, p. 175

"Everything's dead. Everything's dying."
Part 3, Eden: Seashore, p. 180

"She's always looking for like evidence of the decline of civilization."
Part 3, Eden: Limbo in Prayer, p. 184

"You realize at that the moment, the exact moment, when you became alone is already over."
Part 3, Eden: Flat Hope, p. 194

"My god. What am I, without the feed?"
Part 4, Slumberland: 87.1%, p. 217

"Now I'm living. I have someone with me. I'm not alone. I'm living."
Part 4, Slumberland: 54.1%, p. 270

"But there's always time to change. There's always time. Until there's not."
Part 4, Slumberland: 51.5%, p. 276

"Everything must go."
Part 4, Slumberland: 4.6%, p. 299



Topics for Discussion

M.T. Anderson discusses how technology, media and advertisements degrade society. As a young person, do you think this is true? Is there any value to technology, media and ads? Can they actually raise a society's intelligence in any way?

Do you feel, as a young person, bombarded by advertisements as Titus and his friends do? Why or why not? What type of advertisements influence you the most? Can you resist them?

Is America becoming an illiterate society due to all the technology? What type of illiteracy do you see? For example, do you see people not use the language correctly or vocabulary become lessened? Give some examples.

Can technology be a good thing? Today's youth embraces technology, but the older generation does not embrace it as much. If you had to convince someone from the older generation that technology is positive, what real life examples would you use? And what examples would you use from this book?

The corporations take over the feed. Do you think corporate America dominates the youth and people in general in real life? How or how not? Is there a way of not succumbing to corporate America, or does everyone eventually submit to corporate America, as in the novel?

Would you like to have a feed in your brain? If so, what type of ads, shows and music would you put on your feed and why? Create your own feed and tell the class about what you chose and why.

Is Violet a positive character or a negative one? She continually fights the feed and dies trying. Do you think it is worth the fight? Why or why not? If this world really existed, would you be like Violet, or more like Titus's friends? Who is right, those who fight the feed or worship it?