

Matched Study Guide

Matched by Ally Condie

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Plot Summary

In "Matched" by Ally Condie, Cassia lives in a world where Society has defined rules and events. She is challenged by her grandfather to open her eyes to see beyond what is generally considered acceptable. When she falls in love with a young man who is outside of Society's approval, she begins to understand what her grandfather is talking about.

Cassia and her family arrive at City Hall for a special celebration. She is going to find out who she is supposed to spend the rest of her life with - her Match. Cassia's Match is in the room instead of in another City Hall, which is very unusual. It's her best friend, Xander.

She knows nearly everything about Xander and is curious to see what Society wants her to know about him so she looks at his microcard. She sees another face on the card and begins to wonder who her true Match is. Cassia finds out that the other male on the card, Ky, is an Aberration who shouldn't be Matched with anyone. She knows him because he is another friend of hers.

Shortly after the Matching Banquet, Cassia attends the Final Banquet for her beloved grandfather. He has samples taken so he can be brought back when science advances. Grandfather gives Cassia a secret letter that he thinks she will appreciate someday, and he encourages her to really look into what's happening in her life and her world.

She and Ky begin to get to know each other better and Cassia keeps the truth of her attraction from everyone, including her parents and Xander. Both Ky and Cassia take risks to help each other. She teaches him contraband poetry and hides his artifact when the Officials come through to take artifacts away and he teaches her how to write in cursive.

Cassia's father gets in trouble with Society because he has lost his father's samples. Her mother has trouble at work and has to keep leaving to go on trips. Cassia is in trouble herself as her relationship with Ky comes to the Official's attention. If she doesn't shape up, it will affect her future job placement. Cassia is one of the best Sorters around, and she is in the final testing phase for her job. As a final task, she has to sort workers. The best workers will be placed elsewhere, and the others stay in this job that shortens their lives. Ky is in the middle. She places him with the better group even though she doesn't know if it will take him away from her. She does this to save his life.

Ky is taken away from his home. He is sent to the Outer Provinces to fight. Cassia knows this is basically a death sentence. She is determined to find him. Society makes everyone take a tablet to forget the situation, but she refuses to take it. She wants to remember him even if it is painful.

Cassia's family is relocated due to her mother's work decisions. On the way out, Cassia's parents and Xander offer her support in finding Ky. She is sent to a work area close to the Outer Provinces, and she is determined to find Ky someday.



Chapters 1-7

Chapters 1-7 Summary

In "Matched" by Ally Condie, Cassia lives in a world where Society has defined rules and events. She is challenged by her grandfather to open her eyes to see beyond what is generally considered acceptable. When she falls in love with a young man who is outside of Society's approval, she begins to understand what her grandfather is talking about.

Cassia is on an air train with her best friend, Xander. She is a bit nervous. She shows Xander an artifact that her grandfather gave her for her birthday. It's a compact. She uses it to carry her three emergency tablets. Xander has an artifact, also. It's a pair of shiny platinum cufflinks. They arrive at City Hall, and Cassia reflects on the fact that she had always hoped that her Match would take place on her birthday. She is happy that it worked out that she would be Matched on her 17th birthday. Cassia wishes Xandar optimal results as they walk into City Hall.

The meal is a very special event. Those who are Matched get to wear special outfits, and the food and table settings are exquisite. One by one the girls who are going to be Matched stand up and face a screen, which shows them their Match from another City Hall. The Matches are listed in alphabetical order. Once the Match is made, each young person receives a silver box that holds the information about their Match.

When it's Cassia's turn to find out who her Match is, she stands up. She is very nervous, but she tries not to show it. The screen is blank. This is highly unusual. A blank screen can only mean one thing.

Cassia's Match is in the room. It's Xander. They're both extremely happy about the decision. As Cassia holds the silver box, she realizes that she doesn't need to read the microcard to see what Xander is like. They spent their childhood together, and she already knows his favorite things in life. Her parents are very happy with the decision, also. While she is thrilled about the Match, Cassia can't help feeling a bit of sadness about the fact that she won't get to know someone new. She doesn't get to uncover the mystery of her future mate.

The hostess tells everyone that they can read the courtship guidelines later on because there is plenty of time. Cassia knows that it is true. The Society has insured that they live better and longer than anyone else who has lived in the history of the world. This is mostly thanks to the Matching system, which produces offspring that are healthy both physically and emotionally. It's her world, and it's run by rules. She is now allowed to touch Xander, and she is free to dream about him.

Cassia doesn't dream about Xander like she thought she would. She takes off the tag that documents her dreams, and she hurries down to breakfast. She doesn't want to be



late for work, and she overslept a bit. Her brother teases her, and she and her mother reflect on the evening before. Cassia loves the gown she wore the night before. Her mother reminds her that she will get a little piece of fabric from it. Each person who is going to get a Match gets to choose one dress to wear for this special evening. Cassia is the only one of all the Matches who picked the green gown. According to the probability Matches, this was completely in line with her personality. Bram goes off to school, and Cassia heads off to work. She daydreams about Xander while she is on the air train. Everyone looking out the window notices white flakes floating through the air. At first they think it's snow in June, but then they realized that it's seeds from Cottonwood tree. The trees are being knocked down because they aren't efficient. Cassia notes that this is one of her mother's favorite trees. Even though it is impractical, it is beautiful.

At work, Cassia has to sort numbers. She is very good at sorting. After work, Cassia goes home and finds that everyone is out. She decides to take a look at the microcard to see what that Society wants her to know about Xander. His face disappears from her screen, replaced by another face.

Cassia is completely bewildered as she looks at the port screen. She is distracted when Xander comes to go to recreation with her. Xander greets her, and begins teasing her. She is worried about what happened, but she doesn't share that with him. Xander points out that now they are allowed to express physical affection if they want to. Cassia thinks this is a good idea. It feels so right to be Matched with him, but she can't help thinking about the other face that she saw. She's completely baffled by the entire situation, and she recognizes the face of the other boy. She knows him.

Many of the youth in the area have decided to take advantage of the Saturday recreation option. Cassia decides to watch rather than play. Xander really enjoys playing games. She remembers that when she was young, she liked to play them, also. Now she prefers to watch them. A friend of hers asks what it's like to know her Match. She says that it's wonderful because it's Xander. Her friend agrees that he is the best of all of them.

An Official comes to talk with Cassia. She is a kind woman, and she reassures Cassia that she doesn't have to worry about anything. She realizes that there is a problem with the microcard. The woman reassures Cassia that she is still Matched with Xander. She gives Cassia a new microcard. The woman says that she is from the Matching department, and it's her job to deal with information malfunctions. When questioned, Cassia admits that she did recognize the face of the other person who showed up on her card. This makes the entire situation even more unnerving. It is Ky Markham. Cassia tells the woman that it seems very odd to her that she recognized both of the people that were on the card. The woman reassures her that Ky has no idea that he showed up on the card.

The woman says that Ky won't ever show up on anyone's card because he is an Aberration. His father had committed an Infraction. Ky was adopted by his current family



due to some unusual circumstances, but the Society can't ignore what his father had done.

Cassia agrees to keep quiet about the entire situation, with one exception. She wants to tell her grandfather who is turning 80 day next day. The woman agrees that this would be fine. There is an announcement over the loudspeaker. Everyone has to stand completely still and not speak because somebody has dropped their tablet container. This is a very serious situation. Cassia remembers when they were young and Xander lost his container. He didn't want to be cited for losing it so he kept on diving for it. He stayed underwater too long, and Cassia was worried. A boy appeared and went in after him to help them. It all ended out all right, and the container was found. The boy was Ky. Cassia saw him that night at the recreation center while they were supposed to be standing still. She steps forward toward him, and she steps on the missing tablet container, crushing the pills inside. Ki disappears.

As chapter 6 opens, Cassia is still remembering the time when she first met Ky. She had gone home to tell her parents about him. She said he was new, and that he was staying with Markhams. They adopted him. He was an orphan from the outer provinces. This was a rough area filled with Aberrations and some Anomalies according to rumor. The boy was adopted with Society's approval. There had been a strange situation where an Anomaly came in and killed the Markham's boy. When their nephew came up for adoption, Society gave them the boy to make up for their loss.

When Cassia visits her grandfather, she tells them about the Matching microcard confusion. She tells him about Ky and how hard-working he is. Grandfather asks if she has permission to tell him, and she says that she does. He jokes around regarding the fact that she is allowed to tell because the dead can't talk. She doesn't appreciate his joking.

She remembers a time when her grandfather helped her overcome a fear when she was younger. They talk about her grandmother; someone who she never knew. The grandfather says that the grandmother would have encouraged her to question situations and not just take them at face value. Cassia and her grandfather have a close relationship, and she is sad that he is turning 80. Grandfather asks Cassia to bring the compact to his Final Banquet the next day. She tries not to cry in front of him as she promises that she will bring it.

Grandfather's 80th birthday is the night that he is going to die. Everyone knows that, and there is a Final Banquet for him so his family can be with him in his final hours. Society has determined when the optimal time to die is, and it ensures that individuals died before they had gone too far past their years of usefulness. It's a way to die with dignity, surrounded by loved ones. Each family member brings a special gift to give to Grandfather before he dies. Cassia brings a poem and letter she created for him by cut-and-pasting sentiments that were already written.

Grandfather has a private Final Banquet. Family members gather and some friends come in and out. The Society takes some samples, and the family is relieved to know



that when science advances, they will most likely be together again thanks to Grandfather's samples. He is given a gold box that holds images from his own life that he can watch while he is dying. The family shares a wonderful meal together then they pay their respects Grandfather individually.

Grandfather asks Cassia for the contact, and he shares a letter with her that was hidden in the compact. He encourages Cassia to stop writing other peoples' words and to use her own. He tells her that he is giving her a gift that she doesn't understand yet, but he thinks that someday she will appreciate it and understand it. He dies very peacefully. His last words tell his family how much he loves them.

Chapters 1-7 Analysis

The author introduces the reader to a new world. It's similar enough to our own that we can easily identify with it, but the differences are enough to keep it intriguing. We are introduced to an extremely ordered Society with unique rules and guidelines. At first glance, everyone seems to be content, even happy, with their place in the Society.

The reader also has the opportunity to understand the closeness of Cassia and her family as well as the closeness of Cassia and her friend, Xander. They talk comfortably with each other, support each other, and joke around with each other.

Cassia finds out that she is Matched with her best friend. This is both good and bad. For the most part, it's wonderful. She loves him and thinks he is very handsome. He is happy about the Match, too. Both their families are happy about it. The sadness she feels is due to the fact that she won't experience the unraveling of the mystery of someone new like her comrades will experience over the next few years as they learn more about their Matches.

Cassia lives in a world that has been put together and nurtured to be strong, healthy, and long-living. They do this by making that perfect Matches and by having a rigid set of rules. Cassia looks at the tablets that she keeps in her new compact. One is blue, another is red, and another is green. She doesn't know anybody who knows what the red tablet does. This is foreshadowing that the red tablet might be very important in Cassia's future.

When Cassia wakes up the morning after her Match Banquet, her ordered world is out of sorts. She didn't dream of Xander as she had expected to, she is running late, and it looks like it is snowing even though it's June. Nothing seems to be going smoothly, yet nothing is too difficult to deal with, either. When Cassia talks about her plans for the day, she intends to go see her grandfather. She had a major event happen in her life the night before with her Matching banquet, and he is going to have one the next day as he celebrates his Final Banquet. She is going to visit him, and this shows that they are close family. She wants to connect with the older generation.

The reader discovers that Cassia is very good at sorting. She can find patterns easily and excels in the job. Everything in her life has in order from work to recreation and



meals. This order is thrown off when she looked at the microcard to find out more about Xander. Someone else's image shows up on the card. This is a phenomenon that is not supposed to happen.

Even though Xander and Cassia are so close to each other, she is not willing to share what she saw on the microcard with him. She tries to sort through the situation in her mind. When she is with Xander, it feels incredibly right. She knows other people are envious of their situation, but she also is thrilled at the idea of the Match. It's unsettling to her is that someone else's face appeared on the card. She recognizes the face as someone else that she knows.

In Society, it seems as if the Officials know everything that is going on. Cassia is out with Xander enjoying some recreation and one of the Officials comes over to her to talk with her about the microcard. Although Cassia knows Ky, she doesn't really understand his situation until the Official tells her about it. He has an unusual background. As Cassia reflects on the first time she ever met Ky, the reader sees that there is a connection.

In this chapter, the pills are mentioned once again. This time, there is an emphasis on their importance. Cassia sees Ky and she is drawn to him. As she takes a step towards him, she inadvertently steps on the missing pills. There is a symbolic foreshadowing in this scenario. Cassia is drawn to Ky, and order turns to chaos.

Ky comes from an unusual background. He is adopted by a family even though he comes from a very rough area. He can't be completely accepted by Society since his father did something very wrong. In this chapter, the reader finds that Cassia has an unusual background, also. While most people in their Society take the rules and regulations for granted, Cassia's relatives encourage her to think for herself. They love the outdoors and a lot things that aren't necessarily practical. When Cassia visits her grandfather, it's noted that her prime time of life is only beginning, while his is ending. For some reason, this also feels like an ending for her. She doesn't know why. Her grandfather had one request, and she agrees to grant it. She will bring the compact that he gave her to his Final Banquet. Even though she doesn't understand why he would ask this, she loves him enough to respect his wish.

The order of Society is exhibited in this chapter. Grandfather is turning 80, and it's time for him to die. There is a special routine. The family visits, medical samples are taken, memories are shared, and gifts are bestowed. Cassia has a very hard time saying goodbye to her grandfather, but she knows that it is right. He shares something very special with her, and he talks with her about his belief that she of all the people in her family will one day understand the importance of the gift that he gives her.



8-14

8-14 Summary

The teens are complaining about their choice of recreation. They want to go to a showing, but it's the same one that's been around for two months. Cassia doesn't want to go back to the game center because she still feels badly about what happened the last time she was there even though Xander reassures her that it wasn't her fault. Ky joins them, and he hasn't seen the film yet. This surprises them until they realize he has had to work through all the other showings.

Cassia notices that Ky's eyes seem to change with what he wears. She notices there is a lot of depth in his eyes. She wishes she had a microcard about him, but knows he won't have one since he is somewhat of an outcast from Society.

Xander senses that something is wrong and tries to comfort Cassia. She doesn't feel as if she can share her thoughts about Ky with him so she says it's just her grandfather, which is partially true. During the film, the youth see an over-done scenario of death outside the Society. Cassia notes that Ky is crying. She isn't used to seeing someone suffer. She pretends she doesn't notice.

Cassia is with a group of students in from of the Arboretum. They are the first group that is allowed to try the new activity of hiking in many years. They start on a small hill filled with vegetation. Cassia is very excited to be out in nature. It reminds her of her grandfather. She finds a secluded spot and takes out the paper he gave her, trying to memorize the words. It's a risky action, and she can't get caught. The words on the paper captivate her, and she realizes why they were banned by Society. They promote rebellion.

Realizing that she lost a lot of time reading, Cassia runs the rest of the way. Ky is the only person there ahead of her. They have the opportunity to talk with each other, and they address some topics that are generally considered taboo by Society. As others come to join them, Cassia realizes she needs to destroy the paper her grandfather gave her. She realizes that she heard someone near her as she was reading it. Ky tells her that he saw her. He touches her arm, and she wants to touch him back. As they go down the hill, she thinks about the words she read and wonders if her Match really should be Ky.

Something is wrong at Cassia's house. The neighborhood is shut down, and Officials are searching her home. She is worried that they have discovered that she has the writing, and she hides it once again. She isn't the problem, though. The Officials are there because her father never turned in Grandfather's tissue samples. He lost them. This horrifies Cassia because it means Grandfather is truly gone. They will never be able to bring him back with the advances of science. Her mother defends her father



because she loves him. Bram tries to offer the watch Grandfather gave him as a sample for the Officials, but they say it isn't enough and won't work.

As Cassia tries to come to terms with all that happened throughout the day, she thinks about the pills. The green pills calm people down, and she is allowed one a week. Cassia has never taken it, mostly because Grandfather encouraged her to face things in life without it.

In an effort to avoid her father, Cassia goes to breakfast late. She is trying to figure out how to get rid of the paper Grandfather gave her. The best option is at an old library since her paper will blend in with the papers of all the books getting destroyed at the library site. Her father is working there that day.

Hiking is canceled due to bad weather so Cassia has some free time to go to the old library. Ky is on the air train with her. They talk with each other at the station, but sit separately and don't talk on the train. He gets off at a station before hers.

At the library site, Cassia sees her father working. He is an Official, and she is happy his job wasn't taken away when he lost Grandfather's samples. She notices another Official watching her father. Cassia sends her paper to the incinerator.

Back in class, Xander asks her if everything is all right. She wants to tell him everything for a moment, but changes her mind. Xander tells her about a new activity - a picnic. He signed her up for it. Cassia wonders if they should sign Ky up for it. Cassia learns that another friend received her vocation. She wonders if Xander will get his before she gets hers. The storm hits while she is in class, and it reminds her of some lines in a forbidden poem.

At work, Cassia finds out that she is going to get a personal testing soon. This is a good sign. While she is sorting, before she is observed, her mind wanders and she makes a mistake. That's very unusual for her.

On her way home home, her father comments that someone stated they saw someone who looked like her at the site. She explains why she was there. He looks a bit disappointed when he finds out what she did, but he tells her she did the right thing. He explains that Grandfather asked him to destroy his tissue samples. This is hard for Cassia to relate to. She understands her father's position but can't decide whether or not he was right to listen to Grandfather's request when the results are so final.

The youth are enjoying the picnic. They do some work and are rewarded with ice cream. Em confides that she is off-kilter. She already used her green pill for the week, and she had meant to save it for her Match Banquet. Cassia tries to comfort her and tells Em that she can use Cassia's compact the night of the banquet.

The youth continue working in the gardens, and Cassia is reminded of the stories her mother told her about flowers when she was young. She realizes her family always sorted. They don't create at all, they just sort. Xander pulls her out of her contemplative mood. They kiss and everything seems right with the Society and its decisions. They



have an hour left of rec time so they go to the music hall. Ky is there. He tells them he spends a lot of time there. Em has a panic attack, and Xander slips her his green pill since she already took hers. Ty can't give one because he doesn't have one.

The Officials are at work the next day. They are there to observe Cassia. She is tagged and told to begin. Cassia does an excellent job sorting. That night she dreams about sorting. It's the night of Em's Match Banquet, and Cassia dreams that she has to sort her friend. She is supposed to tell Em to take the red tablet in her dream. She is told it will help her friend, but she can't find her. When she finally finds the girl, Em doesn't have a red tablet. Cassia is happy to save her and offers her own red tablet to the girl. Em drops dead at her feet after taking the pill. It's a horrible dream.

To calm down after she wakes up, Cassia takes Xander's microcard to the portscreen. Her mother is there, talking with someone even though it's very late at night. Her father is there, and he talks with her about meeting her mother. When her mom gets off the portscreen she tells them she has to leave on a trip for work.

The weather is still horrible the next day so Cassia can't hike again. She goes to school and wants to research the poets. She can't get the words out of her head. Em is in the meal hall, and she is thrilled with the results of the Match Banquet. She tells Cassia that she gave Ky the compact to return Cassia.

8-14 Analysis

Cassia's grandfather encouraged her to think outside the box. In this chapter, she is beginning to look at the world with a new vision. Everything in her orderly world is changing. She doesn't know what to do with the forbidden words in her pocket, and she is beginning to react a bit differently to her friends. She wants to learn more about Ky, and she isn't sharing everything with Xander as she would have done in the past.

Cassia has seen this showing before, and she is filled with pride when she sees the aerial shot of her world. When she sees visions of life outside her world, she feels that it's overdone. It doesn't seem real to her. She catches Ky crying. He has seen a lot more than she has. Although it's not pointed out directly, this shows Cassia and the reader that he might have seen more hardship than anyone else, and there might be some validity to the harsh images shown on the screen. He doesn't know how to react. She is unused to pain and suffering in the world she has grown up in.

Chapter 9 - A few days after the showing, Cassia joins the class for hiking. It's the first time her generation has experienced this type of activity, and she is very excited about it. They start with the basics, climbing a small hill. This does not disappoint Cassia. Her family is familiar with nature, and they have told her about it. Her grandfather used to go hiking himself. Her mother works at the Arboretum and has told her about plants and trees. Cassia knows that even though the hill isn't very high, it will still be a challenge to climb because of the foliage. She is ready for the challenge.



The youth were instructed to begin hiking, but they aren't given any other tips. This surprises Cassia. Everything she does in life has rules to follow, and now she has a bit of freedom. Since she is so athletic, it's easy for her to get ahead. She takes advantage of the situation to stop in a secluded area to read the paper that her grandfather had given her. The words reach right into her soul.

She knows that writing such as the poems she is reading has been banned because they encourage revolt. Cassia is a bit disappointed in herself for never creating anything or saying anything that can inspire anyone to do anything. She gets so absorbed in the words that she loses track of time. She has to run to get to the top of the hill in a timely manner. Ky is the only one there. This gives them a unique situation wherein they can talk to one another. As they talk, Cassia realizes that she put herself in a really precarious situation when she opened her note. Ky saw her reading the paper. Now he knows her secret. She thinks that she can trust him.

Chapter 10 -Since everything is so orderly in Cassia's world, it's extremely unnerving when things are different. When she arrives home to discover that her neighborhood is basically shut down, it makes her very nervous. She doesn't know if she's the one being scrutinized or if her family is. As she has shown in the past, Cassia remains calm under pressure, quickly coming up with a plan.

Cassia loves her grandfather very much, and her solace in his death was the fact that he would be resurrected once again thanks to the tissue samples. They would all be together when scientists figured out how, and she firmly believed that someday the scientists would do this. When she finds out that her father has lost her grandfather's tissue samples, the idea of death is very final to her. She doesn't know how to assimilate this information.

Now that Cassia knows her Match, she is even more observant about Matches around her. She observes how her mother supports her father in this terrible time. It makes her wonder about her own Match. She knows her mother came from a different place, and she wonders what her mother brought from her past. This makes her wonder what, if anything, Ky brought from his background.

Cassia is angry at her father for losing her grandfather's samples. She thinks about the role Grandfather had in her life. He helped her think through situations and was there for her when she was afraid. She remembers how he encouraged her to work through her feelings so she didn't have to rely on her tablets. This a bit of foreshadowing. She has a dream that is very symbolic. She needs to internalize the words of the contraband poetry.

The next morning Bram doesn't seem very distressed. This is in stark contrast to Cassia's take on the situation. She tries to avoid her father because she is so upset with him. She shows a deceitful side of her nature when her mother asks where she is going, and she says she is going to go visit her dad when, in reality, she is going to the site to destroy the paper her grandfather gave to her.



At the air train station, Cassia establishes a deeper connection to Ky. On the train, they are separate. At the site, Cassia realizes that they are always being watched, even when they don't realize it. She feels as if she is betraying her grandfather as she incinerates the paper, but thinks it's the right thing to do.

At school, Cassia and Xander talk. She is tempted to share everything, but isn't ready to yet. They show that they are both respectful of each other. This bodes well for their future as they are Matched. By the end of the chapter, Cassia is feeling a great sense of loss.

Work is different for Cassia. She has to sort physical features. She realizes that a few choices can yield many different outcomes. After work, she talks with her father, and he explains his situation to her. She understands why he got rid of Grandfather's samples, but she isn't sure if she agrees that it was the right move.

She tells her father what she did with the writing. He looks pained, but he tells her it was the probably right choice since they are being watched. She realizes she is like her father in that they both destroyed part of Grandfather, but she still remains upset with her father. Cassia makes a concentrated effort to become mentally and emotionally stronger.

The youth are able to enjoy the picnic, even though they know they were manipulated into doing work with the ice cream as a reward. As the youth talk in this chapter, Cassia realizes that Xander is recognizing that there are some problems with the Match on her end. They don't really get a chance to talk about it, though. It doesn't ruin the mood for the day, and they talk a lot. Xander's actions remind Cassia of how good and kind he is. He isn't perfect, though. He's willing to break some rules himself. He shows this when he gives his tablet to help Em.

Cassia excels at her job. She is so good at sorting that she even dreams about it. Her dream turns into a nightmare, and she is glad the people watching her won't see the exact images from her dream. This dream shows how she tries to help a friend, but ends out killing her after receiving deceptive input from Society.



Chapters 15-21

Chapters 15-21 Summary

The next morning, the world feels much better. The storm is gone. When they go hiking, Ky presses something into her hand. She thinks he is returning his compact. He runs off ahead of her, and she feels disappointed. She feels as if something is lost when he leaves her, but she reminds herself that she has gained something, too. Her compact is back. When she is alone in the woods a few minutes later, she notices that Ky didn't give her compact back. It's a different artifact that is the same size as her compact. It says N, E, S, W, and there is an arrow inside the letters. The arrow spins and points back at her. She wonders why Ky gave it to her.

A student tells the Official that another student has fallen, and the Official at the top of the hill tells Ky and Cassia to stay there and keep track of who comes in. This gives them time alone. While they are there, Cassia wants to talk with Ky about the artifact, but she also wants to keep it to herself for a few days. She doesn't want him to realize that he made a mistake giving it to her. When Cassia looks at him, she notices he is doing something strange. When she asks him what he is doing, he says that he is writing. It's an old-fashioned type of script. She asked how he learned to do it since they don't teach it in the schools. He says that it is his secret. He knows her secret, and now she knows his. Cassia asks if he will teach her how to write, and he reminds her that they are not supposed to do it. She asks him. The Official wither their injured companion before he has a chance to answer her. Cassia walks down the hill with Livy, who is improving on her own hiking. The girl is very talkative. Cassia thinks about writing. As they rush to the trains, Cassia hears Kyle whispered a word. He is going to teach her how to write.

Cassia hurries to the top of the hill to talk with Ky. She shows him how she learned how to draw a letter "C" then she asks him to teach her another letter. He teases her, telling her that she could look at the letters on her scribe to learn how to write. She points out that they look different. He says that it's called cursive.

He decides to teach her the letter "A." It's the next letter in her name. He tells her that she is learning her name because if that's all she ever learned, she will have still have something. He asks if there's anything else she wants to learn to write, and he realizes that she wants to be able to write her poems. He asks her to tell him the poems so that two of them know them in their memories. It's risky business, and it will put Ky in danger. She wonders if she can trust him. She tells him one line of the poem, and he hands her something papery. He tells her to get rid of it when she is done looking at it.

After dinner that evening, Cassia realizes that Ky has given her a napkin. At first she's disappointed, then she realizes that there is something written on the napkin. It's a drawing depicting his life before she came to know him.



Cassia's father comes to tell her that there is a message for her on the port. She destroys the napkin and goes to talk to an Official who appears on the port. He tells her that it's time to get together and do something special with her Match. She and Xander will have a special meal the next night, chaperoned by an Official. After the call, Xander comes by to visit, and it feels really good to be with him. It's a different kind of good than being with Ky. She feels that she knows Xander too well to be matched with him.

After Xander leaves, Ky comes home from work. He hands Cassia a brown paper envelope. She starts to tell him that she has his artifact, and he tells her that he knows. He smiles. When she goes to return it, he tells her that she can keep it for a while more.

Cassia can't wait to get to the top of the hill and talk with Ky. She wants to hear more of his story. When she gets to the top, she discovers that Livy has beaten her there. The girl is talking with Ky, and he is laughing at something she says. Cassia notices that she is drawing something with a stick, and she wonders if Ky is teaching her how to write. She turns away. When they get down the hill, the Official tells them they will be doing something different the next day. Ky states that is is good since he was beginning to feel like Sisyphus. Ky asks her if she has anything to tell him, wanting to hear more of the poem. She is out of sorts after seeing him with Livy so she doesn't share it.

Cassia goes out to dinner with Xander. It's odd because the two of them can't be alone. They have the same food they always eat, just in a new location. As they go out, she remembers a time when she was younger. Her mother had a flower in her hair. Since it wasn't legal to pick flowers, she realized that her father must have bent the rules for someone he loved. As they are eating, Cassia realizes that her portions seem to be smaller than they have been in the past.

They talk over dinner, and Cassia asks Xander why he didn't kiss her the other night. He said there were too many people around. They talk about all the Officials on their street recently. Cassia finds herself thinking about Ky and who really should have been her Match.

When Ky and Cassia get home from their special dinner out, they see another air car in front of Em's house. Officials come out of her house holding something, and they look sad. Cassia finds out that the Officials are collecting all the artifacts. They are going house to house collecting them. Cassia realizes that she still has Ky's artifact, and she has to make sure that it's safe. Xander offers to help hide her artifact.

She tries to help calm her brother who is very upset that he has to give up Grandfather's watch. She finds out that her father had to go out and collect other people's artifacts. Officials can't collect from their own family members. When the Officials come to take the artifacts away, they say it's because the Government decided that artifacts promote inequality in Society members. They say they will put the artifacts in a museum so people can still see them.



Cassia is very angry about what's happening. In her anger, she almost destroys the paper Ky gave her, and she discovers that it's more of Ky's story. The Officials didn't take it away. She loves the fact that she is holding a piece of him.

The next morning, everyone is quiet on the air train. Xander whispers to Cassia, telling her where he hid the artifact. It's in the garden in front of Ky's house. Cassia wonders if he knows that it belongs to Ky, and she also wonders if he realizes that she has feelings for Ky.

At hiking that day, the youth are split into pairs. They are matched according to their ability. Cassia is paired with Ky. They are told that they have to put markers on branches near fallen trees and other rough areas.

As they go off alone, Ky and Cassia have the opportunity to talk about the night before. She tells him that the artifact is safe. He was very worried about her, not the artifact. She also tells him that Xander helped hide it. Cassia asks Ky if he had been teaching Livy how to write the date before. He told her that Livy had seen them and wanted to know what they were doing. He told her that they were drawing. Cassia apologizes for being so standoffish the day before, and Ky tells her that he likes seeing her jealous sometimes. Cassia shares some more lines of poetry with Ky, and he teaches her more writing.

Em feels horrible about the entire situation with the compact. Cassia reassures her. As they get close to home, Cassia sees that her mother is back from her trip. The two talk about the artifacts being taken away. She and her mother have a rare opportunity to have a nice meal together since Papa and Bram are out of the house. Her mother talks a bit about her trip, but there is some confidential information that she is not allowed to share. As she prepares to go to the game center with her friends after dinner, Cassia looks at the picture Ky drew. She realizes that he saw his parents die.

At the Game Center, Xander challenges Ky to a game. They decide to play a game of chance, which is very unusual for Xander. They are evenly matched no matter what game they play. Xander tells Cassia that he has noticed that Ky tends to throw games. Ky doesn't want to stand out.

On Sunday, Cassia is at work and she's having a hard time concentrating. She keeps thinking about Ky and his family and how he witnessed his parents' deaths. Nora tells her to report to the supervisor's station. Officials are there to talk with her, telling her that she scored very well on the test.

That afternoon, Cassia's mother finds out that she has to go on another trip. Cassia notices that her mother is missing a green tablet. She realizes her mother is dealing with some difficult situations.

On Monday, Cassia has a chance to talk with Ky as they walk through the trees together. She expresses her sorrow over his parents' deaths. He tells her the story of Sisyphus. She asks him why he throws games, and he says that he has to, and she



knows it's because he isn't a regular part of Society. Cassia has the realization that she is in love with Ky.

She has already learned how to write her own name, and now Ky is teaching her the letters of his name. They talk about the fact that he is an Aberration and can never be Matched. She asks him what type of person he thinks he would be Matched with if he were Matched, and he says that it would be somebody like her.

Chapters 15-21 Analysis

Cassia has a connection to nature throughout this novel. She feels best when she is out in the fresh air, climbing on the hill and looking at the trees. She and Ky find the opportunity to learn more about each other when they are out in the wild. This is symbolic of their nature, which is fresh and wild. The sun comes out and brightens her mood in Chapter 15. The reader is reminded of how controlling and regimented Society is when a forbidden activity is writing in cursive - something readers will most likely take for granted, perhaps even resent in their own lives. It offers perspective on the freedoms the reader has.

Throughout history, there is an importance in a person's name. Ky teaches Cassia how to write her name so that even if everything else is taken from her, at least she will have that. In a way, he's telling her that she will always have her mind and her own identity, and no-one can take that from her.

On the hill, they share more of the poem. This shows they are willing to take risks for each other as well as for themselves. Once again, the author uses something readers take for granted, and might even resent. It offers value to poetry and the power of words. In this chapter, Cassia is coming to terms with the value of a person as well as words. She realizes people come alive in words and even though a person is gone and physical proof of them is gone, as long as the words are alive in the mind, the person still lives on.

Once life was easy and acceptable to Cassia, but her grandfather encouraged her to open her eyes, and now she sees limitations everywhere. She points this out to Xander as they are allowed to go out together, yet they are not alone.

This chapter focuses on a shift in the relationship between Ky and Cassia. She knows that she enjoys being with him, but when she sees him with Livy, it really affects her. She is jealous to a point where she won't share more of her poetry with Ky. She is still annoyed with him when she leaves for her time with Xander. She thinks about relationships and risks. Her father takes risks for her mother and the rest of the family. As she thinks about relationships, Cassia realizes that the more she tries to understand Ky, the more she learns about herself.

The officials rifling through everyone's house looking for artifacts only serves to enhance the atrocities Cassie has begun to discover about her world. It even pulls out the worst in her as she begins to verbally snap at her brother instead of supporting him. The



situation is difficult on everyone, even the officials who are in charge of the task. However, nobody revolts or rises up against Society. The people don't agree, yet they take the intrusion in stride.

In this chapter, the reader discovers that Xander is willing to break the rules and take some risks for Cassia. He comes up with a plan to help hide her artifact that she is trying to protect. She takes the opportunity to protect Ky's artifact rather than her own.

Chapter 19 - The next morning, nobody talks about what happened the night before. The removal of artifacts was a hard hit, but nobody argues against it. Xander tells Cassia where he hid the artifact, and it makes her wonder if he knew all along that it belonged to Ky, not her. They don't discuss it.

When Cassia arrives at Activities, she discovers that they are going to be paired off. This gives her an opportunity to become even closer to Ky. She learns about a society that is different from her own. It's the one he was familiar with before he moved to her world. She and Ky are connecting mentally and verbally, and she is very tempted to connect with him physically. Still, she holds herself back from touching him.

Cassia thinks about growing up with her friends. They are taking different paths, but there are still many similarities that intertwine them. She thinks about her own past and her family's past. She and her mother are able to talk with each other, and her mother is able to help her without Cassia ever fully divulging the situation she finds herself in. The scene with her mother lies in stark contrast to what Ky experiences with his parents as he witnesses their deaths.

At the Activity Center, Xander challenges Ky to a game. This is unusual and might be a hint that Xander is challenging Xander to more than a game. He might really know about the connection between Ky and Cassia. He notices that Ky always throws games. Ky always does his best to stand back and observe others. He is careful to avoid standing out either as a failure or as one who excels.

Cassia is getting ready for the next stages of her life. She is taking the tests to see what job she should have, and she is excelling. Meanwhile, at home, her mother is dealing with some very stressful situations. She doesn't share them with the family, however. Cassia appreciates the fact that her mom protects them, and she knows the two of them are alike in the way they keep secrets.

Ky tells Cassia the story of Sisyphus. The reader knows that this will be pivotal at some point in the story. Ky makes it obvious that he relates to the story. The mood of the chapter shifts from serious to light-hearted, and Ky shows Cassia a more serious connection between them. Her name is now in her head so he teaches her his name. He confesses that he is an Aberration. She doesn't care.



Chapters 22-28

Chapters 22-28 Summary

Cassia is in her Language and Literacy class when a message comes across the port calling her to leave with an Official who will escort her out soon. She is told that she has committed an Infraction. This rarely happens, especially in public. Cassia wonders which Infraction she has committed. The Official is the same one who talked with her after the Match card showed Ky's image. She tells Cassia that Cassia did a wonderful job on her sorting test, and that she has the highest score of the year. She could get almost any job she wanted. Unfortunately the Official might have to tell the work centers that Cassia is unfit for sorting-related work due to her choices in personal relationships.

As the Official warns her about her relationships, Cassia mentions that Ky is just a friend that she hikes with. The Official says that feelings towards people who are different from a Match are common, but in this case, it's unacceptable since Ky is an Aberration. She knows it's more than a friendship. She warns Cassia that if the relationship continues, Ky can be sent back to the Outer Provinces. Cassia asks her what Infraction she has committed, and the Official says that was an error. She hasn't committed an Infraction.

When Cassia gets home that day, she discovers that a package has arrived. It's a piece of her dress from the Match Banquet. She realizes the Society is good at offering pieces of life, and not the whole thing. Cassia looks at the latest image Ky has given her. It's in color this time. She recognizes her Official in the drawing.

Cassia wakes up to the sound of loud shrieking. She hurries to find her brother. Everyone is gone from their beds. She finds her family outside in their sleepclothes. This hasn't happened since Ky's father wandered outside in his sleepclothes after his son died. The Society decided that the maple trees in the neighborhood are a problem so they are cutting them down. Cassia's mom says it's a warning, and her father thinks it's his fault while Cassia is thinking it's her fault. Her mom clarifies that it's a warning for her.

During hiking, Cassia talks with Ky and tells him about the Official's visit. She says the Official knows about them. Ky hands her a poem he got for her. She is close to crying so he reads it to her at her request. It's beautiful, and she feels herself wrapped in the poetry. Ky kisses her on the cheek.

Cassia is filled with hope, and she lets herself imagine a future with him even though she knows it will never happen. She dreams of a relationship with him where they are free to go out together and enjoy their artifacts together.

The next day, on the hike, Ky talks with her about the Prisoner's Dilemma. The only way to stay safe is if neither prisoner betrays the other one. They get as close to each other



as they can, but they know they cannot kiss each other except for on the cheeks. Once they truly kiss, they have committed an Infraction.

One Saturday night, Cassia is in the showing theater with Ky and Xander. She is holding Xander's hand when her Official comes by. She gives a small smile of approval. Cassia feels guilty about her relationship with Xander, but she doesn't want to give up anything that she has with Ky.

Ky asks her about her memories sometimes, and she remembers the first day that Bram went to school. He didn't want to go and was having a fit until she calmed him down and got him on the train before her family got into trouble. She told Bram that there were games on the scribe, and she would show him the games if he went to school. Because she loved her brother, she created the games.

Ky tells Cassia that Bram's first day of school was the first day he really noticed her. He asks when she noticed him. She wants to say that it was when she saw his face on the screen after the Match Banquet, but she doesn't think that's the right thing to say so she tells him that she first really noticed him on top of the first hill. That night, she realizes that she forgot to ask Ky more about his story. She wants to know what happened to him when he was taken away.

One day when they are hiking, Ky tells Cassia how to obtain illegal items such as the poem he gave her for her birthday. There are Archivists at the Museum who save information, and they're willing to part with the items if the prices high enough. Ky and Cassia talk about singing, and Ky points out that the voices they hear in their hundred songs are manufactured voices. He tells her that he has heard real singing in his life, and it is nothing to compare to it even though it doesn't sound as perfect as what they hear in their own music there in Society. The two bury her birthday poem so they don't get in trouble.

Ky asks Cassia about her Match Banquet. He wants to know how she felt and what she thought about. She tells him that she thought about angels. The next day, Cassia asks him why he was crying at the showing. He tells her that the images on the screen were real. It could have been his own village. Cassia asks him to close his eyes, and she writes "I love you" on the ground. She tells him he doesn't have to write it back, and he tells her he doesn't want to. He verbally tells her the same words. They almost kiss, but the whistle blows and saves them.

When they get down to the bottom of the hill they see some Officials. Cassia recognizes one from her sorting test. The Official is there to take her to the on-site portion of her sorting test. Cassia is taken to the place where Ky works. She knows he worked in a tough setting, but she never realized how bad it was. It's a very harsh environment. At first Cassia thinks that it's her job to sort through this situation and determine what could be more efficient. She is told that that is not her job. She is supposed to sort the better workers from the other workers. The better workers will be will be relocated. Some might even have to leave the city. She does the sorting, and she knows she has done a good job. There is a worker who is right in the middle. She realizes that it is Ky. This



makes the decision very difficult. If he goes into the higher group, she won't know what will become of him. If he stays in the lower group, he will die early. She makes her decision, putting him into the higher group.

When they are on the hill the next day, she asks Ky more about where he came from. He tells her about the red and orange colors in his homeland there that are so different from the browns and blues and greens where they live now.

Cassia moves so fast on her exercise machine that she wipes out. She quickly gets up before any Officials notice. She gets a call from an Official regarding her sorting job. She is told she did a wonderful job, and they ask if she wants to make any changes. She doesn't.

Later, Cassia talks with her mother about Matches and love. Cassia doesn't tell her about Ky, but her mother knows something isn't right. They speak about her trip. People are growing forbidden crops, and she had to write them up. Cassia wishes everything would go back to normal.

Ky notices things are changing, and warns Cassia they are running out of time. He tells her he knew his data was interfered with, and he knows Cassia is his match. She goes off and decides to tell Xander everything. He is very hurt.

Cassia thinks about taking the green pill for some calming. At hiking, they are told that the summer Activities are shortened this year, so they will stop after that day. Ky and Cassia decide to break rank and go all the way to the top. Ky tells her that he knows about the sorting, and he is part of the group that isn't staying. At the top of the hill he hands her his artifact, telling her that Xander will teach her to use it to find him if he leaves. He gives her a paper with the last part of his story, and they kiss.

Chapters 22-28 Analysis

Chapter 22 - The Official that works with Cassia tries to wake her up to the ramifications of her actions. She knows about the girl's relationship with Ky and warns her off. She tries to get Cassia to realize how crazy the world would get if everyone could make their own choices, without rules. This is exactly what Cassia's grandfather wanted her to open her eyes to. There are few things she can do to really take control of her own life, but staying true to Ky is something she will definitely cling to.

Chapter 23 - Things are not going smoothly in Cassia's life. She is on edge, knowing that she is defying the rules of Society. When she wakes up to shrieking, her immediate concern is for her family. The entire neighborhood is discombobulated. Society is taking away another piece of beauty. First the Officials took their artifacts, and now they are taking the very trees their street is named after. Trauma is linked to Ky's family as it's pointed out that the last time someone was seen outside in their sleepclothes before this occasion was when Ky's adoptive father was running around after his son died. It comes to light that Cassia isn't the only one rebelling against Society. Her mom and dad both take this situation as a warning to them based on their own actions.



Later, Ky gives Cassia a gift. He tells her how to obtain illegal information. There is a crescendo of tension building in the book so the reader knows this information will most likely become pivotal to the story. Nature once again adds serenity to a tense situation.

Chapter 24 - In a dark world, Ky's gifts offer Cassia hope. Still, she doesn't feel free enough with him to be completely honest with him. Just as she holds things back from Xander, she holds the truth of when she really noticed Ky back from him when he asks. He tells her when he first noticed her, and it's a scenario which shows her caring and creativity - a creativity she personally thinks she lacks.

Chapter 25 - Cassia compares her time with Ky to a part of nature - a storm. It suits her and her family's history to compare their lives with nature. Ky tells her how to get a hold of illegal items. The value put on different objects is interesting. Cassia holds her poetry in such high regard, she doesn't think she could ever part with it. They talk about their attraction to each other, and Cassia finds she can't tell Ky the truth about her seeing his face on the screen. This shows that even though their connection is strong, she's still holding back. Cassia's eyes are opened to the harsh realities outside her immediate world as she talks with Ky about the screening.

Chapter 26 - In Chapter 26, Cassia is faced with a challenge greater than any challenge she has face in her life. She must sort the workers in Ky's work area. Not only does she have to block out the horrors of the actual workplace, and the mental horror as she learns of poisoning, but she has to make decisions on who is going to have the opportunity to leave the place although their destination is unknown. She chooses what she hopes is best for Ky, who is right between the groups, just as he always was when they played games. He is in the group to leave, even if it means leaving her. The decision is horrible, but she thinks she is saving his life.

Chapter 27 - Cassia's mother is more like her than she has ever known before. The woman doesn't blame her for falling in love with someone other than her Match, and she, too, faces situations that affect other peoples' lives. She sees the harsh realities of their world and is mandated to play god, changing peoples' lives with her words just as Cassia had to do with her sorting.

When they are hiking for nearly the last time, Ky mentions that they are running out of time. He means time together, time for Society, and time for hiking. Change is all around them. He shares with Cassia the fact that he knows about the sorting and he also knows about the Match. While he might not agree with Cassia's decisions, he trusts that she always made her choices out of love, doing her best to find the best for him.

When Cassia finds out that everyone lied to her, she isn't as willing to trust their love. She feels as if she is a pawn in a game. She comes clean with the story to Xander, who feels betrayed, rejecting her.

Chapter 28 - Even when everything is falling apart, Cassia still resists all urges to take a drug to calm herself down. On the last hike, she apologizes to Ky for doubting their love. The two break the rules together first by climbing to the top of the hill so they no longer



feel like Sisyphus, then by truly kissing. Ky gives Cassia his artifact, showing that he knows his own future even if she does not. It will help her find him. For one brief moment, their world is perfect.



Chapters 29-32

Chapters 29-32 Summary

In the morning, Cassia wakes up to the sounds of screaming. This time it really is human screaming. Ky is being taken away, sent as a soldier to the Outer Banks. His family knows it's a death sentence. The Officials come in and tell everyone to take their red tablets. Cassia destroys hers, and her Official knows it, but doesn't address the issue.

The red tablet works on those who took it. They lose their memory of the last 12 hours. Cassia doesn't want to forget. The pain of losing Ky is part of loving him. Her mother gets a message. Their entire family is going to be relocated the next day. Cassia goes out to try to find Ky. She goes to the Museum for information, but doesn't want to trade any of her valuables. Looking at the maps in the Museum, she has a clue as to where he is going, anyway. Her Official is outside the Museum. She explains the entire story of the Match. It was set up as an experiment. She doesn't know who put Ky's information in the pool, though, and she doesn't know everything that happened between the youth.

Xander is waiting for Cassia when she gets home. They are both sad about the events happening in their lives. Xander tells her about a time when he made Ky steal red pills. At that time he discovered that the red pills didn't work on him. Therefore, he remembers everything that happened the morning Ky was taken. He is hurt that Cassia is going after Ky, but he is caring enough to support her. He broke rules, getting a stash of blue pills, to help her on her journey. Cassia thinks about all the different ways her world has changed. On the air-train out of town, Cassia's father talks with her as if she is an adult. He and her mom offer her full support.

Cassia is working in the soil. She is in a remote village upon the request of her parents. It's their way of helping her get closer to Ky. She knows she has strength in her thoughts and the words in her head. She will find Ky and they will be together again.

Chapters 29-32 Analysis

The shrieking in Chapter 29 is jarring after the perfect moment in which Chapter 28 ended. The shrieking of the trees going down earlier in the book was a foreshadowing of the shrieking of human agony depicted in this chapter as Ky is taken away. Cassia's love is taken away, and her world is falling apart, but she still won't resort to taking the tablets. She's rather live with the harshness of reality than with the utopian ignorance Society chooses for its people. The guilt she feels over her part in Ky's deportation weighs heavily on her, even though she knows she tried to help him, and he doesn't blame her.



Both Cassia's and her mother's decisions are turning against them. They tried to be honest and do their best to make life better for those they loved, and their lives changed for the worse. Ky is taken away, and the family is banished.

Cassia tries to discover Ky's whereabouts using the information he offered her on the hill. She realizes she doesn't have to give up items of value, and she can choose her own path to get back to him. Conversations she had with Ky helped prepare her for this situation from Sisyphus to the Prisoner's Dilemma.

The only saving grace in the situation is the support of their friends. Even though Xander is jealous and hurt, he really comes through to support his childhood friend and Match. On the journey to their new land, Cassia's parents offer her their support and understanding even though the situation is extremely difficult for them. They truly understand about bending rules for those they love.

It seems like Cassia's parents are punishing her, but they are really helping her by getting her in prime position to run off and find her love. Cassia reflects on her life, her love, and Society. She is ready for the next phase of her journey. She knows that one day she will reunite with Ky.



Characters

Cassia

Cassia is a teenager on the cusp of taking on adult responsibilities. She is trying to determine who her true Match for life is and what her job for her future will entail. She is one of the best sorters in her area, and she can push aside her emotions to do her job. The reader discovers this when she is in her final sorting project and has an emotional quandary yet lets practicality override emotions. Cassia is pretty, and she isn't like many others. She is the only girl at the Matching Banquet to choose the green gown. She is uncommonly close to her grandfather, and she listens when he encourages her to think outside the box. She wants to be more creative, yet she doesn't seem to realize she is already creative. This is shown when she comes up with games for her brother. Cassia doesn't want Society to dictate her life even if living outside of Society causes her pain. She falls in love with an Anomaly, and she is willing to risk things and break rules for those she loves.

Ky

Ky is a hardworking teenager who hasn't had it easy in life. He lived in the Outer Region with his family until his parents were killed. Due to unusual events Society allowed him to be adopted and raised by his aunt and uncle, even though he was an Anomaly. Since he had this status, he was given horrible work to do and he wasn't treated like other youth his age. He didn't get to go to banquets or get a Match. Ky is athletic, and he loves words and poetry. He cares about other people, respecting them even when they turn against him. Not wanting to stand out, Ky tries to perform in the middle in all that he does, even though he is smart and has the ability to excel. Ky falls in love with Cassia, and he is willing to take risks for her. He shares information about the underground with her, and he understands when she inadvertently sends him to his own possible death with her sorting.

Xander

This is Cassia's best friend. She is Matched to him at the banquet.

Grandfather

This old man is unusually close to his family. He gives Cassia an old handwritten note before his death.



Bram

This is Cassia's younger brother. He is very close to her, and she tries to protect him.

Father

This character helps restore old neighborhoods, turning them into new Boroughs. He is interested in history and historical gadgets. He is close to Cassia, although she is upset at him for a while.

Molly

This character is Cassia's mother. She works in the arboretum and has to make a tough decision that will affect other lives. She has a close relationship with Cassia.

Norah

This individual is Cassia's boss at her sorting job. She is not very friendly.

Em

This character is a good friend of Cassia. She is prone to panic attacks, and Cassia shows her friendship by letting the girl use her compact for her Match Banquet. As she hikes through the woods she realizes that Ky didn't give her the compact back. This is a strange, new artifact.

Lon

This character is a student in the hiking class who is always getting in trouble for speaking out of turn. Ky admires this.

Livy

This character is a student in the hiking class who talks non-stop and climbs almost as fast as Ky and Cassia.

Tennyson

This is the poet Cassia reads and connects with. Even though his poetry is outlawed, it reaches her soul.

Patrick

This is Ky's adoptive father. He was found wandering the streets in his sleepclothes after his son died.

Aida

This is Ky's adoptive mother. She is wailing the morning that they take Ky away.



Objects/Places

Compact

This is what Cassia receives on her birthday from her grandfather.

City Hall

This is where Cassia and Xander go for the banquet where they find out who their Matches are.

Mapletree Borough

This is where Cassia lives. It is known for being tight-knit and exemplary neighborhood.

Artifact

These are approved materials that hold special meaning to members in the Society. Each individual is allowed to have one until they are taken away by Officials.

Maple Trees

These are what are taken away because the Government decided they were a problem.

Green Tablet

These were taken to help calm people down. They were each allowed one per week.

Blue Tablet

This acts as a nutritional supplement.

Red Tablet

This erases the memories of most people who take it. Ky and Xander don't feel the effects of it.



The Hill

This is where Ky and Cassia are partnered during their Activity time. They talk a lot during there meetings here.

Watch

This was a gift for Bram from his grandfather. It is taken away from him and he is devastated.

Cottonwood Seed

This is what floats in the air at the beginning of the story. Cassia associates it with beauty and freedom.

Scribe

This is what Cassia used to make games for her brother when he was reluctant to go to school.

Port

This is a communication device used in homes and schools.

Farmlands

This is where Cassia's family is deported to.

Outer Regions

These are the are the areas around Cassia's world. They are filled with warfare and suffering. Ky is sent off to fight in this area.



Themes

Love

Love is a very important theme in the story. As the story opens, Cassia is on her way to a banquet to find out who her life is going to be linked with. Society determines who the best Match for each individual is and they discover this in the year following their 17th birthday. They get to know their significant other by getting information off microchips and having meetings with their Match before they are truly united.

Conflict arises when Cassia's card shows two different matches. This opens her eyes to the fact that her original Match, her best friend, might not be the only person out there for her. She is torn between the passion and love that she feels for Kai and the love that she has for her best friend, Xander. Her love for Kai is a forbidden love since he is not accepted by Society.

Different types of love are highlighted throughout the novel. Cassia has a deep love for her brother, who she goes out of her way to calm such as on his first day of school. She also has a loving relationship with her parents and grandfather. Her grandfather gives her a special gift, and she loves and respects him enough to begin to see the world in a new light. Her parents show love for her by bending rules for her and supporting her, even though it means she will be leaving them.

Cassia, Grandfather and Kay also show a love for the written word. Ky risks punishment by teaching Cassia how to write in cursive. Grandfather gives her a banned poem as a gift, and she and Ky memorize the beautiful words of the poetry, internalizing the words.

Rules and Regulations in a Society

It can be argued that every place and situation has rules and regulations, but the ones in Cassia's world are extreme. Children come from approved, mandated Matches, everyone has a curfew, each individual has a specified diet, and each person is assigned their work and play. Within these strictures, the individuals are given enough choice to make them feel free, even if they are not free in reality. For example, each youth has to do an Activity, but they have choices regarding what Activity they want to do. Cassia and Ky choose to hike for their Activity. Once this choice is made, they have to follow the rules and guidelines for the Activity. The only time the two ever reach the top of the hill is when they break the rules and make a run for it.

Cassia always felt comfortable with the rules, blindly accepting them until her grandfather encouraged to really look at things. She began to see how the rules were unfair and harsh. Not only that, but they didn't work. Even with all the regulations, Society around her is breaking down. The individuals in her world have lost beauty along with freedom. They don't know what real music is, they don't know the power of words, and they can't express themselves in color and art.



Sacrifice for Family and Friends

Just as love is a main theme in this novel, so is self-sacrifice. In the world run by rules, individuals show love and compassion for each other by breaking the rules. If they are caught, they are labeled by Society. Ky was labeled because of his father's actions, yet the label meant that he had a horrible job and couldn't participate in "normal" Society activities such as receiving a Match.

Cassia and her family and friends bent and broke the rules for each other, putting themselves at risk many times. They also went out of their way to cover up for each other. When Em has her panic attack, Xander slips her his green tablet, even though he knows he can get into trouble. He does this as a sign of friendship. Ky risks getting caught when he teaches Cassia how to write. He also gets her an illegal poem for her birthday. Cassia's father picks flowers illegally for his wife, and he also destroys Grandfather's samples at Grandfather's request. Cassia teaches Ky a poem and she also hides his artifact for him.

Arguably the best example of self-sacrifice in the book, Xander hands Cassia a bag of blue tablets for her journey. This is significant because he is putting himself at risk by helping her even when he feels hurt and betrayed by her love for Ky. The bond of friendship and the special love between them is enough for him to steal the tablets for her even though she doesn't ask for them.



Style

Point of View

"Matched" is a story about Cassia. It is written by the author, Ally Condie, who is a retired English teacher and a mother of three sons. The novel is written as a first-person narrative, which helps the reader delve into Cassia's mind and her innermost feelings. As a youth on the cusp of the adult world, Cassia's thoughts and feelings about the future are highly relatable. The world she lives in is different enough from our own to be intriguing, yet similar enough to ours that the reader realizes the book is a true political statement.

The first-person narrative allows the reader to step into Cassia's shoes while the reader remains omniscient. The reader understands actions and repercussions for the actions so there is a real connection as the reader watches Cassie go through her thought processes - as she tries to come to terms with her life and her love.

The author highlights both Kathy's dialogue and her own thoughts so the reader can clearly see the process behind your decisions. The reader also this to see how others react to the decisions that she has made such as when Ky faces the life path he must follow based on her decisions and sorting. Because it's first-person, the reader feels truly connected to Cassia, and by the end of the book it feels as if Cassia's journey is just beginning, which is good since the book has a sequel. The reader will most likely want to see where Cassia's decision lead.

Setting

The setting for "Matched" is very similar to our own world as we know it. It's also different enough to be considered fantasy. We have our own government, and Cathy's world has Society. We have rules and regulations, and she has rules and regulations to the extreme. We have cars and trains, and she has air trains. We have iPads, and she has a Scribe. We have Skype, and she has a Port.

Cassia lives in a Utopia that seems all shiny and happy at first glance, yet cracks and ugliness begin to show as the novel progresses. It's a world with no poetry and with synthetic music. Nature is around, but carefully controlled. Food is practical rather than savory. The people in her world are given just enough freedom to make them think they are happy and free, yet they still have to bow to Society's dictates. When unpleasant things occur, they are synthetically altered to forget the atrocities Society place upon them.

There are other places on the fringe of Cassia's world. They are called the Outer Provinces. These wild regions are filled with fire and poison and warfare. When Cassia first sees them in a showing, she thinks they are fictionalized. Ky grew up in the Outer



Provinces and told her they were real. The darkness of this area threatens to encroach on Cassia's world, and she is ready to go through the harshness to find her love.

Language and Meaning

The author weaves old ideas and new ideas together in this futuristic story. She brings literature to light, showing her passion for words. This is fitting since she is a retired English teacher. Her dialogue and word choices are standard for a teen and she uses words that will become outdated. She also avoids any type of swearing that could offend readers.

Poetry is cherished in the novel, and the author uses poetry from Tennyson to demonstrate the power of words and to show how words can stand the test of time and keep a person alive. She uses the poetry to demonstrate how one can use words to stand up against unfair treatment. The futuristic language and ideas are easily understandable since they are spinoffs of our own materials, words, and scientific knowledge.

Structure

"Matched" by Ally Condie has 32 chapters. It's a straightforward book with the typical cover, title page, copyright page, and dedication before the chapters begin. Each chapter is labeled with a number instead of a title. The chapters range in length from under 5 pages to under 15 pages. The book closes with acknowledgments and a brief blurb about the author.



Quotes

"Now that I've found the way to fly, which direction should I go into the night?" (Chapter 1, Matched p. 3).

"It is strange how we hold on to the pieces of the past while we wait for our futures." (Chapter 1, Matched p. 11).

"Every minute you spend with someone gives them a part of your life and takes part of theirs." (Chapter 6, Matched p. 65).

"Do not go gentle into that good night, Old age should burn and rave at close of day; Rage, rage, against the dying of the light. And as I read on, I know why it speaks to me: Though wise men at their end know dark is right, Because their words had forked no lightning they Do not go gentle into that good night." (Chapter 9, Matched p. 96).

"When I hold onto nothing can I be the best, only then can I be what they expect me to be." (Chapter 14, Matched p. 154).

"Is falling in love with someone's story the same thing as falling in love with the person himself?" (Chapter 17, Matched p. 196).

"Growing apart doesn't change the fact that for a long time we grew side by side; our roots will always be tangled." (Chapter 20, Matched p. 216).

"Ky can play this game. He can play all of their games, including the one in front of him that he just lost. He knows exactly how to play, and that's why he loses every time." (Chapter , Matched p. 230).

"Even if he didn't live his story, enough of us have lived lives just like it. So it's true anyway." (Chapter 21, Matched p. 236).

"It is one thing to make a choice and it is another thing to never have the chance." (Chapter 21, Matched p. 240).

"I'll tell her that I don't want my life to be samples and scraps. A taste of everything but a meal of nothing." (Chapter 22, Matched p. 249).

"Because either way, whichever life I build, has to be built on truth." (Chapter 27, Matched p. 300).

"We may not hear the sound of pain often in Mapletree Borough, but the instinct to try to help has not yet been Matched out of us." (Chapter 29, Matched p. 317).

"As much as it hurts, I have to hold onto the whole story of him, the painful parts, too."
(Chapter 29, Matched p. 326).

"I have learned something about love through all of this - about the love I have for Ky and the love I have for Xander and the love my parents and Bram and I have for one another." (Chapter 32, Matched p. 363).



Topics for Discussion

How is Cassia's world similar to our world?

How is Cassia's world different from our world?

Why was Ky separate from others in Society and why was he allowed to be part of Cassia's world?

Grandfather thought Cassia would come to appreciate the gift he gave her. Do you think she did? Why or why not?

What drew Cassia and Ky to each other?

Why didn't Cassia choose to obtain illegal information in the Museum?

How did Cassia's family show their support for her?