

## The Unbinding, by Eliza Turkey

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I wake up when the sun is just beginning to peek through the mountains. I read the time on my alarm clock, and it takes me a little bit to comprehend that... I'm going to be late for early morning seminary!

I start rushing my morning routine—get dressed, brush my teeth, say my morning prayers...

*Why do we say our prayers so quickly? They're supposed to be individual affairs, yet...*

By the time I'm downstairs and eating breakfast, I'm actually running a little bit early. *Phew.* Bullet dodged. I won't get any yells of "Esther, you're late!" today.

The rest of the day is on track to run just as normal. Early morning seminary is as uninteresting as normal. After, everyone tells me that my answer to that one question was great. *Was it? I didn't really think about it. I don't even know what the question was.* Well, whatever, they're my friends, I'll believe them.

I'm not looking forward to school today. I don't like school in general. Not many of the people I know from my unit are there. It makes it... hard to interact with people, always having to keep in mind that they could be deceiving me to sell me drugs, or whatever. I know very few who would even think about it, but I've always been taught it, so I guess it has to be true.

I don't like school. Either way, I'm going there. *Can't stop the Lord's will, I guess.*

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Smooth. Boring. Uninteresting. That is how 1st and 2nd period go. No one cares. No one learns.

3rd period is English. I'm... conflicted about English. I don't know whether to love it or to hate it. It can be sacrilegious at times, but other times it's actually quite engaging. Not for long, though.

And, as I walk in, I am displeased to discover that the seating chart has moved me away from Jose, a guy I actually like, and instead has placed me next to *Cara*.

I hate Cara. She's loud, noisy, disruptive, and all-around scandalous, knows it, and does it harder if you call her out on it. Why doesn't she stop? And why do I have to sit next to her now?

She doesn't care. I'm too quiet for her to care. When she walks in, she simply plops her stuff down next to me, and takes a position in her seat I can only describe as spider-like. Terrifying stuff.

Mr. Jones begins speaking as soon as the bell rings.

“Class, today we will be starting our unit on *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry. I’m certain that you’ve heard of it, but we will really be going deep on it, so keep an open mind. *The Giver* is about...”

Usually this is the part where I zone out, but... It actually kind of sounds interesting. The more she says about it, the more I want to get started and read it and discuss it.

“...everyone plays their assigned role. But our hero, Jonas, is not assigned. Instead, he is Selected. What does it mean? You’ll have to read it to find out!”

Cara speaks without raising her hand. “Being assigned to a specific task sounds like it would be boring as hell. Why would anyone *want* to be assigned? Only I know what I want to do. Anyone who thinks they know for me is lying. Just let me choose for myself!”

*Wait, what?*

“Well, Cara, that’s getting a little bit too much into the spoiler zone. Let’s blah blah blah blah...”  
Mr. Jones’s words fade into oblivion as I try to understand.

*It shouldn’t make sense. Why does it make so much sense? I shouldn’t feel this way, not about something an unbeliever says, why does it—*

And then it clicks.

*Everything I’ve done I’ve done because I had to. There was never any choice. I never felt good about it, but I thought it was the Lord’s—*

*But—thatwould—*

*No, she’s right. Nothing I do makes sense to me. I’ve just been told to do it, so I do. But they didn’t know. Why do we say the same prayer every time? Why are we instructed to distrust every nonbeliever*

*How can—how can I learn what it feels like to choose for me?*

I need to talk to her.

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