**Book Guide**

**“The Testing”**



By Nano Kongsubto…Y8M

**Introduction to the book**

The Testing is the first book of it’s trilogy. It is written by *Joelle Charbonneau*. The story sets after the seven stages war that left America a wasteland with poisonous water and mutated creatures. A society ruled by a powerful government was created by the survivors of the war. The society was divided into colonies and settled in parts of land that have been revived and was safe to live. Cia was a sixteen years old girl who graduate from school. She was selected to the testing which is a program created by the government to find qualify students that will attend the last university left in America and get a better career. At first Cia was excited and happy that she was selected but when she learns the horrible, murderous truth about the program, her life is changed forever.

**Characters**

***“Cia Vale***” **-** the protagonist. Lives in Five lakes Colony and got chosen for the testing.

***“Tomas Endress” -*** Cia’s boyfriend. Help her during the testing, especially at stage four. He hides a dark secret.

***“Michal Gallen” -*** A testing official who secretly wants the brutality of the testing to stop. He has faith in Cia. He gave Cia tips and help her during the interview and after the memory wipe

***“The man at the fence” -*** Give Cia food and counter drug to the interview drug. Secretly work with Michal Gallen

***“Cia’s family” -*** Her father was a scientist who pass the testing before. He have nightmares after the testing. Cia’s mother also doesn’t want her to go to the testing and just want her to stay at home. Cia’s brothers help her dad work. Zeen, Cia’s oldest brother should have go to the testing but his teacher successfully stop the government from selecting him.

***“Will” -*** A friend Cia made during the testing. Cia help him when he got poisoned by a poisonous plant. Turns out not as friendly as she thought.

***“Zandri Hicks” -*** A friend from Five lakes Colony. Try to flirt Tomas and survived until stage four when she got killed.

***“Malachi Rourke” -*** A friend from Five lakes colony. Died during the second stage because of poisonous plants and a trap that shot a nail at one of his eye.

***“Roman Fry” -*** A selfish candidate who betray his teammate during the third stage and try to kill Cia during the fourth stage. Will killed him.

***“Brick Barron” -*** Cia saves his life from Roman’s betrayal during the third stage. Tries to save Cia life later but end up killing many mutant humans.

***“Dr. Jedidiah Barnes” -*** Highest testing official. Runs the testing and always judging any candidate he sees.

***“Ryme Reynolds” -*** Cia’s roommate from Dixon colony. Kill herself during the first stage because of pressure.

**The Testing process**

The testing is a program run by Dr. Jedidiah Barnes, funded by the new commonwealth government and was designed by Dr. Barnes’ father. It takes place in Tosu city (the capital colony) and an area next to it. All candidates who attend will be given their own bracelet with a symbol on it. The symbol will be different for each person. After the testing, the survivor candidates’ memory about their time at the testing would be wiped out to prevent them from telling others so no one could cheat or learn about the brutality of the testing. If a candidate survived the testing but failed the test, they would be memory wiped and exits the testing without going to the university. There are four stages of the testing:

The first stage are two long paper exams that takes 8 hours each. If failed at this part, the candidate would be sent out of the testing facility.

The second stage is to solve several puzzle boxes to open it and do the given task inside. This task is murderous since the boxes are filled with traps that can shoot nails, give an electric shock and more. The task inside the box is also deadly since the candidates have to test and choose possibly contaminated plants and water and consume them to prove their answer. If they choose the contaminated ones they can be poisoned or killed.

The third stage is about teamwork. The candidates would be assigned to groups and have to decide who should do which given tasks. When decided, they then would go to the room with their task and do it. If a candidate did the task that was already completed by another teammate, they would be punished. There is no information about the punishment in this book because the failed candidates just disappear. A teammate could eliminate others by answering all the questions and trick other teammate to answer the answered questions causing their teammate to get punished. There is no time limit to this task so it could starve candidates.

The fourth stage is the longest and the deadliest. It test the candidates to see how will they react to the situation when they have to live in dangerous wasteland with lots of contaminated resources, mutant creatures and selfish candidates who kill others to lower the amount of their fellow competitor. The candidates would be escorted to metal rooms near the coast of Chicago and have to travel for hundreds of mile to tosu City. They could team up, help others or kill others. The sea is contaminated and dangerous and the two sides of the area was fenced by two tall, death trapped fence that becomes narrower the closer a candidate is to Tosu city in order to make candidates meet each other towards the end. To make it even harder, some areas in the wasteland are also deployed with explosives. The bracelet given to all candidates are listening devices that allowed testing official to spy on them. The equipment available for this task is:

- Clothes from home

- Wash kit also from home

- Two personnel objects brought from home

- 3 things to choose from what the testing official provided: different kind of tool, gear, adventure clothes, food, medical supplies, books, maps, tent, water purification kit, water supply and many type of weapons.

Everything will be packed in a bag given by the testing officials.

At the end of stage four, the survived candidate would take a drug that makes them tell only the truth. They then will get interviewed by testing officials for information about themselves and how they complete and survive stage four. Then the officials would decide who should pass. This process could takes days. When the candidate knows if they pass or not, their memory of the task b they did would be wiped and they would be assigned either to the university or away.

 **How to Survive the Testing**

 Be prepared. Bring comfortable adventure clothes, gear and tool to prepare for anything instead of bringing fancy cloths and decorations. You have to be clever and could work under pressure. Don’t worry if you didn’t complete the test because it will be added to the amount of pressure on you.

At the second stage, you have to work carefully and make right decisions not to trigger any trap and not to consume anything contaminated. If you aren’t sure that you are right, don’t risk it and put it aside.

Don’t trust anyone during the third stage and pay attention to what was happening to think of the right answer and to avoid traps set by your own teammate. You have to work with others well and help friendly people. You also have to decide the right task that you could do best. If you think someone is leading you to a trap, don’t attempt doing any task.

You have to use all your skills during the fourth stage. Survival and combat skills are very important at this point. The decision you make could affect you and others. You should group up a small group to help each other and give you an advantage over candidates who are alone. Still, be careful who you work with. Don’t completely trust them. For private conversations, pretend you go to sleep, use some tools to get your bracelets off and go talk outside quietly. Always be careful of mutant creatures, enemy candidates, collapsing structure and traps set by the testing program. If something too good (for example a paradise with lots of trees and clean water or good shortcuts) appear in the wasteland, it is probably a trap set by the officials. You should through several rocks at the area to make sure it is safe. Also be aware not to consume any contaminated things.

**How to lie during the Interview**

If you got nothing to hide, you don’t have to worry about the interview but if you hiding a secret from the commonwealth, you have to be extremely lucky, strong willed and organized. First, seek help from people who don’t appreciate the brutal way of the testing. Official Michal Gallen and a grey haired unknown man at the fence during the fourth test could help you. Be careful not to expose them otherwise they and you will get into a big trouble. If they agree to help, they might give you a counter drug to the truth drug. Consume it before getting interviewed then use your willpower to lie to the official. The counter drug will help you. Make sure your lies sound true so the officials believe.

**How do you know what has happened after the memory wipe?**

There is currently no way to stop the official from wiping your memory but you could secretly hide a recording device in one of your personnel item you brought from home. Record your story during the testing. Make sure you got your recording device after the memory wipe and listen to your story later.

**About the writer: Joelle Charbonneau**

 *Joelle Charbonneau is a novelist living in Chicago, Illinois. She enjoys art when she was little and learn music and theater as the main subject during her time at the university. She got a master degree at opera performance and likes to make and tell stories. Since she enjoys creating stories, she decided to write some books. Her first two series are Rebecca Robins and Glee Club. The two series are not very successful and didn’t catch the attention of many readers. But then she wrote the testing trilogy and her books sell worldwide. She had completed her most successful trilogy with three books: The Testing, Independent Study and Graduation Day. She had recently written a new book call ‘Need’. Since she just became famous recently, there is not much to be found about her in the internet. She has a son (according to her account on Instagram).*