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## DYSTOPIAN SURVIVAL IN JAMES DASHNER'S "THE MAZE RUNNER"

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### ABSTRACT

*In the novel "The Maze Runner" James Dashner portrays the artificial society in the middle of flare. Dystopia is a representation of imperfect society and survival is one of the emerging themes in dystopian literature. Every human learned to survive in their certain society and made the pathways to their future. Dystopian literature would focus on the ruined society and it was important and hard to survive. James Dashner in his novel "The Maze Runner" tested the youngsters' brain to seek their future in the middle of the pressure. The youngsters alone had to survive with their limited possibilities. Thomas, one of the teenagers helped the other to solve the maze and to escape the glade. With the arrival of Thomas in Glade, the life of the Gladers is explained. This article speaks about the dystopian society and how the Gladers manage to survive in the middle of unknown terror.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Dystopia, Thomas, Maze Runner, environmental collapse*

### THE CONTENT

Dystopian literature is getting famous since the past several years. Dystopia is complete opposite Utopia, a well constructed and desirable society; a pleasant place to grow up for the citizens. The Utopian people are free to express their opinions, keep their individuality and can be free without any compulsion. It is highly imaginary positive world. Dystopia is also an imaginary world but with the dark side. The origin of the word 'dystopia' is from the Greek, means 'bad place'; devoid of all comfortable; a place that appears perfect on the surface but is bad underneath. A dystopia is a future world that broadens and distorts modern day issues into an inexhaustible and dehumanized state in which

controls have been forced upon society. The inhabitants have social and physical limitations which oppress many aspects of their life.

Dystopian literature enriches itself with new emerging themes and survival is one of the core elements. In ordinary life human needs water, food and shelter to survive. The people living in wilderness equip their selves to stand against the disaster, animal threat and famine. Every human being familiarizes itself to survive in his respective situation. But to survive in dystopian society is a hard one. The society has already ruined and surviving from nothing is difficult. Dystopian society always referred with the undesirable society to live. In James Dashner's "The Maze Runner" the

selected teenagers are put in the glade to solve the maze. Solving the maze is their only hope of getting out there to find the future. Including Dashner many writers equip their novels with the dystopian setting- Veronica Ruth, Lois Lowry, Stephen King and Margaret Atwood.

Dystopian world is a place where the disorders and ruins rule the society; a frightening society and opposite to Thomas Moore's Utopian society which is desirable to live with all the human needs. The ruin of the society can appear in any shape such as the disasters, economical and political crisis, human catastrophe, environmental collapse, medicine, virus and possible ways of ruin. In the novel "the Maze Runner" James Dashner presents a world ruined by the flare. To save the survivors of the flare an organization called 'WICKED' steps to find the cure. It uses the brilliant teenagers who are immune to the flare to save the left over people.

The intelligence of a human brain is a tool to evoke new thing in the world. The technologies of the world are the proof of the human intelligence. The WICKED only wanted the youngsters' intelligence and their brain activity under the harsh situation. Their memories of the past are erased before they are put into the glade.

The glade was a mysterious place, specially designed for them. The environment has everything – the artificial sunlight, a forest, and the maze. The maze has to be solved to escape from the place. They are artificial and ordered. The boys are arriving one by one for a month. It is a test to increase their stability to be alive in the hard situation. The survival in the maze is not so simple. Its high walls, grievers and terrific surroundings make the teenagers to live in terror. But they are very quick to organize their selves; they separate their selves by their abilities. Their friendship helps them to survive in the maze –they make their own food, the strong boys run through the maze to find the way, there are keepers to care the young ones. Their own created rules and law allow them to keep the order in the glade.

The Gladers, the boys use to call themselves in the glade, are so keen to solve the maze because they want to find their identity. The WICKED erases their past and manipulates their minds and watches everyone from the other side of the glade. It experiments with them and their activities. It is very hard to be alive without the memories. The boys know only their names and not their past. It is a master plan of the WICKED. Because the boys focus

To survive in the hard core area, the Gladers have to be aware of their situation. The maze is great puzzle and its changing order every night boosts up the brain activity the Gladers. The runners have to

memorize the maze to create the map. They are not like the normal people; they are picked up and trained particularly for solve the maze. Their memories are erased to concentrate fully on the task.

As friendship is a necessity in the Glade, the Gladers have to be mingled with everyone. Without a strong sense of community based on personal and special relationships, the Gladers would not be able to survive. It is because they need one another to fulfill certain roles and it allows a functional society that is self-sustaining. The friendship of Alby and Newt gives the rules and orders of the Glade. They, even though the commanders of the boys, they are very friendly towards others.

Thomas is able to form friends after arriving in the Glade, particularly with Chuck. Chuck has faith in Thomas's ability to lead them to safety, but more than anything he sees Thomas as his closest friend. Thomas is seldom annoyed by Chuck, but it is strongly hinted that these boys might be brothers or may be brothers like relationship. Thomas also forms a close working bond with Minho, the stable one in the glade. This bond allows Thomas to assume a more active role in the Glader community, and which permits him to lead the others out of the Maze. Thomas at first has no strong and friendly bond with Alby but with Newt. Newt being a very good friend to Thomas quickly learns his motto and supports his strength. Newt, not like the others has the trust in Thomas even though he is new one to the glade. He shares and learns many things which give him faith to survive in the Glade.

Thomas's closest and strongest bond, however, is with Teresa, an only girl in the Glade. It is a bond that remains largely uninvestigated by the end of the novel but even the little contact the two characters have with each other is poignant and loaded. They identify each other as friends even without knowing anything about each other or themselves. Their earlier friendship left an imprint that no amount of memory-wiping could fully erase. Furthermore, they each hoard some memory of their collective past. In this manner, our friends can be seen as repositories and reflections of our shared lives.

At numerous times in the novel, Thomas must call on his own will and fortitude to overcome a frightening situation; willing is his key to move forward and putting some new effort to solve their puzzle. He with the second thought believes his own will and not cares about the rules and laws. When he sees Minho and Alby struggling to return to the Glade before the Wall closes, he rushes out to help them. After that, it is his quick thinking and unwillingness to give up that saves his own life as well as Alby's.

These actions also invite examination from the Keepers, who feel Thomas has broken the law and

must face punishment. Thomas's greatest threat to the order of the Glade is that he questions many of the postulations on which the Gladers have based their lives. His willingness to face questioning and persecution also requires bravery. Without the will to take risks, no advancement is possible. This bravery eventually permits Thomas to show the Gladers a way out of the Maze and on to the next stage of the experiment.

Throughout the novel, the Gladers constantly attempt to maintain hope despite the terrible nature of their circumstances. Three of the main characters, Alby, Newt and Minho, each have their own ways of maintaining hope. Alby sticks to a system of laws and punishments that is intended to provide the Gladers with stability, as well as the hope necessary for their unremitting search for an escape. In contrast to this approach, Newt shows that hard work can successfully keep the Gladers hopeful and stop them from panicking, which Thomas later comes to agree with. Minho shows that the Runners' daily schedule of navigating the Maze actually helps to give the rest of the Gladers hope. While all three leaders at different times yield to doubt and a loss of hope, their different approaches show how possible it is to maintain hope even in the toughest of circumstances. At the end of the novel, the Chancellor also makes clear that the Creators put the boys in the Maze in order to test whether or not they would lose all hope and stop fighting for survival. The novel ends by symptomatic of that hope is the most important factor

in surviving dire situations, and it is the Creators' hope that the boys will help them to save humanity.

Survival skills are techniques that a person may use in order to sustain life in any type of natural environment. These techniques are meant to supply basic necessities for human life which comprise water, food, and shelter. The skills also support suitable knowledge and interactions with animals and plants to promote the sustaining of life over a period of time. Survival skills are often basic ideas and abilities that ancients invented and used themselves for thousands of years.

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