#### ***The Kite Runner***

#### **OCC: Summer Reading Requirement**

#### **Mrs. Russell: nrussell@solvayschools.org**

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| **Dear OCC English 103/104 Student,**  **Ah! Sunny days, camp fire evenings and a good read: *Happy Summer*! Welcome to The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini, your required summer read. I hope you are moved by this tale of friendship, shame, forgiveness and redemption. Below, you’ll find a chapter summary and important quotes. To guide your work when you return to school this fall, you will find it helpful to record notes, reactions, or questions about the text as you read. I’d love to hear your thoughts on Hosseini’s story. You can communicate with me via email (above). I’m looking forward to teaching you [again] in September!**  **Much Love,**  **Mrs. Russell** |

#### **Summary: Chapter 1**

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| *“That was a long time ago, but it’s wrong what they say about the past, I’ve learned, about how you can bury it. Because the past claws its way out. Looking back now,*  *I realize I have been peeking into that deserted alley for the last twenty-six years.” (1)* |

The period is December 2001, and our narrator, who tells his story in the first person, recalls an event that occurred in 1975, when he was twelve years old and growing up in Afghanistan.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 2**

#### Childhood in Afghanistan: As children, the narrator and Hassan would climb trees and read books together. Hassan is Hazara (Shia Muslim) and the narrator is Pashtun (Sunni Muslim).

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#### **Summary: Chapter 3**

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| *“There is only one sin, only one. And that is theft.” (17)* |

Amir, our narrator, shares memories of his father, Baba. Amir tries to please Baba by being more like him but rarely feels he is successful.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 4**

The story jumps back in time to 1933, the year Baba is born, and highlights the connection between Baba’s family and Ali’s, Hassan’s father.

**Summary: Chapter 5**

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| *“Huddled together in the dining room and waiting for the sun to rise,*  *none of us had any notion that a way of life had ended.” (36)* |

The beginning of the end of the Afghanistan they know: gunfire erupts in the street. The lovely Afghanistan of their childhood slips away. Amir and Hassan encounter Assef, the local bully, and two other boys from the neighborhood. And Baba bestows an enormous gift to Hassan.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 6**

For boys in Kabul, winter is the best time of year. The schools close for the icy season, and boys spend this time flying kites.

**Summary: Chapter 7**

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| *“I actually aspired to cowardice, because the alternative, the real reason I was running, was that Assef was right: Nothing was free in this world. Maybe Hassan was the price I had to pay, the lamb I had to slay, to win Baba.” (77)* |

In the winter of that year, 1975, the tournament is held in Amir’s neighborhood. The day of the competition comes. Hassan runs for the kite and is chased by Assef and his crew.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 8**

Amir and Hassan spend less time together. Amir turns thirteen and Baba invites more than 400 people to the party he plans. Rahim Khan tells Amir he is always there to listen, then gives him a leather-bound notebook for his stories.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 9**

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| *“The only gift I didn’t toss on that mound was Rahim Khan’s leather-bound notebook.*  *That was the only one that didn’t feel like blood money.” (102)* |

Amir tells a lie. Everything changes.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 10**

It is March 1981. Amir and Baba flee Afghanistan. They are now refugees in Pakistan.

**Summary: Chapter 11**

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| *“America was different. America was a river, roaring along, unmindful of the past.” (136)* |

The story jumps forward in time. Baba and Amir are in Fremont, California, where they have lived for nearly two years. Amir falls for Saraya.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 12**

After nearly a year of longing for Soraya, Amir finally gets the nerve to speak to her; however, Amir must focus on Baba, who has fallen ill.

**Summary: Chapter 13**

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| “It had seeped into our marriage, that emptiness, into our laughs, and our lovemaking.  And late at night, in the darkness of our room, I’d feel it rising from Soraya and settling between us.  Sleeping between us. Like a newborn child.” (189) |

Amir learns more about Soraya’s family. In the summer of 1988, Amir finishes his first novel.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 14**

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| “There is a way to be good again.” (192) |

The period is June 2001, and Amir has just received a call from Rahim Khan (chapter 1), who wants Amir to see him in Pakistan.

**Summary: Chapter 15**

Amir lands in Peshawar, where Rahim Khan is. Amir remembers the last time he saw Rahim Khan, twenty years earlier in 1981. It was the night he and Baba left Kabul. Rahim Khan must ask Amir for a favor, but before he does, he must tell him about Hassan.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 16**

Rahim Khan tells Amir the story of how he found Hassan, and the narrative shifts so that Rahim Khan narrates in the first person.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 17**

The story shifts back to Amir’s perspective. Amir sits with Rahim Khan thinking of everything that happened between him and Hassan. Rahim Khan hands him an envelope. It contains a photograph of Hassan and a letter for Amir.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 18**

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| “A boy who won’t stand up for himself becomes a man who can’t stand up to anything.” (221) |

Amir realizes he and Baba were more alike than he knew. They had both betrayed their truest friends. Amir recognizes he is not too old to start fighting for himself.

**Summary: Chapter 19**

Rahim Khan arranges for an acquaintance named Farid to take Amir to Kabul. Farid and his father had fought against the Soviets. They stop for the night at the home of Farid’s brother, Wahid.

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#### **Summary: Chapters 20 & 21**

#### When Amir and Farid reach Kabul, Amir does not recognize it. The Taliban patrol the streets. Amir makes an appointment with the head of the Taliban to gain access to Sohrab.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 22**

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| *“My body was broken—just how badly I wouldn’t find out until later—but I felt healed. Healed at last. I laughed.” (289)* |

Amir and Farid arrive at the house where Amir will meet the Taliban official. Farid waits in the car, and two guards lead Amir to the room where he is to wait. The unthinkable happens.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 23**

Amir meets Baba’s eyes and realizes he is the one wrestling the bear. He wakes up and discovers he is in the hospital in Peshawar. Farid tells Amir that Rahim Khan has gone, but he left a note. Amir leaves for Islamabad and takes Sohrab with him.

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#### **Summary: Chapter 24**

Amir and Sohrab arrive in Islamabad. When Amir wakes from a nap, Sohrab is gone.

**Summary: Chapter 25**

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| “Quiet is peace. Tranquillity. Quiet is turning down the VOLUME button on life.  *Silence* is pushing the OFF button. Shutting it down. All of it.” (361) |

Amir finds himself back in a hospital, but this time, it’s not for himself. Amir and Sohrab arrive in San Francisco in August 2001. Amir teaches Sohrab the art of kite running.