



Throughout the book, we see many interactions between Offred and significant people in her life. These people being Fred, the Commander, Serena Joy, the Commander's Wife, and Luke, her husband, and indirectly with her daughter. My art piece represents Offred in the middle surrounded by Fred, Serena Joy, Luke, and the photo of her daughter.

To begin with Fred, he has a more casual expression towards Offred. I made this artistic choice because I felt like how he behaves towards and views Offred is chill. He wants to play Scrabble with her, isn't too cautious about how he or Offred is supposed to act, and even shows

her forbidden things. The one moment that I thought was the most important that showed this was when he implied to show Offred and to do something extremely intimate and forbidden, “Up for a little excitement?” (pg.229). The role of the handmaid is to give birth, as commanders have rule over everything. They have their wife and maybe a mistress but this much intimacy in their relationship is forbidden. Fred even risks himself by exposing his forbidden acts to her, “In here, it is, he said quietly. I saw the point. Having broken the main, taboo, why should I hesitate over another one, something minor?” (pg.157) This quote showed that Offred was aware of the many taboos that were broken by the Commander. At this point, he might as well do anything else with her because nothing else would be worse.

Beneath him is Serena Joy. Her expression is a more concerned one, maybe one with sadness. She, like Fred, is looking at Offred. I chose to have this expression and not anything negative because of the deal she had with Offred. She wanted a baby from Nick and for her and Offred to work together so Fred wouldn't find out, “Well,’ she says, with firmness; no, more than that, a clenched look, like a purse snapping shut. ‘ we just won't tell him, will we?’” (pg.205-206) and “Your little girl. But only maybe.” (pg.206) Although there are some social statuses in place, Serena Joy risked herself by scheming something extremely forbidden to a Handmaid, Offred. She offered that she might show her a photo of her daughter. I interpreted that she said “might” not because she could easily decide not to show the photo and get Offred's end of the deal, but how hard it probably was to get that photo. Eventually, that would seem to be correct as it was told that she probably had a group of Marthas working together to sneak that photo out, “I have to return it, before they know it's missing.” (pg228) Serena Joy must clearly trust Offred enough to ask her these things as well as to get that photo. And in reverse, Offred must have had some trust in Serena as she eventually got that photo to her. Serena Joy is Fred's wife, she might have

some more influence than Offred, a handmaid in some ways, but in the end, she's still a woman, someone at the bottom of society. It's thought by Offred that she believes that she knows that Serena Joy knows about the secret relationship between Offred and Fred, "Sometimes I think she knows. Sometimes I think they're in collusion. Sometimes I think she put him up to it, and is laughing at me; as I laugh, from time to time and with irony, at myself." (pg.163) Even if Serena Joy might have known it and is behind it as Offred thought, she must still know the treatment. How they're being used, so I decided to have that bit of sadness that she might know more about how Fred views his relationship with Offred more than what Offred thinks she knows.

On the top right side is Luke. He has a more serious face, with less explicit emotion. This is because we have not directly seen him personally in the story. We have only seen him in Offred's flashbacks. He is Offred's husband, someone who she truly cares about. But yet, we still don't know a lot about him, only about the things she believes might have happened and what she hoped, "Any day now there may be a message from him" (pg.106) She still has those thoughts of him. She knows him. Compared to Fred and Serena Joy, I had Luke have an expression closer to Offred, one that doesn't have a lot because there's either too much going on or nothing at all because they all cancel each other out. However, in the middle of what's going on between her and Fred and Serena Joy is dragging her away from this focus. This is why her expression is blank- as these people are shifting and adding layers and filters to her perspectives and in turn, her mindset and actions. That's also why I have those red squiggly lines, to show those 4 things dragging her focus and attention from 4 different directions and ideas.

Finally, below Luke is the photo of Offred's daughter that Serena Joy gave her. I made it seem blank, not as much as the other three people. I chose to depict the photo like this because of how Offred described her viewing of it, I am only a shadow now, far back behind the glib shiny

surface of this photograph. A shadow of a shadow, as dead mothers become. You can see it in her eyes: I am not there.”, “But she exists, in her white dress. She grows and lives.”, and “Still, I can’t bear it, to have been erased like that. Better she’d brought me nothing.” (pg.228) To me, it felt like she didn’t feel that warmth or true feeling when she saw that photo. It felt too distant to feel anything which was why I didn’t have any detail in it, because it would have been the same if she never saw it. If she didn’t see herself in her daughter, what else would she be looking for?