

THE BOY I AM · BY K.L. KETTLE

CRAFT SPOTLIGHT 2 – THE GARDEN

Under a real sky, mid-book · English · GCSE AO2 · KS3–KS4 · no spoilers

A boy who has never stood on grass is led into a garden. Watch how the writing slows down — and how every sense doubles as a point about power. Each note names the move *and* where it leads.

Kicking off my slippers, I roll my toes through the prickling, uneven green carpet. Except it's not carpet, not like I've known before.

It's alive.

The air tastes rich. Drinking down breath after hot breath, my head spins... "Now this is beauty!" the Chancellor hums. Under vast swirling bulbs that plink and sparkle like they're dancing, she leads me into a garden beneath a huge glass dome. The sky? Real and endless and black.

The ladies call their dark-hours the 'night'. In the kitchens, the dorms, our appointments, the dark-hours are when the House Fathers flip a switch. I wonder who turns off the sky.

From *The Boy I Am* by K.L. Kettle, Chapter 8.

CRAFT & WHERE IT LEADS each move, and the theme it plants

"Except it's not carpet... It's alive."

Craft: a long sentence corrected by a two-word one; the shock of real grass lands on a full stop. **AO2 ·**

SENTENCE FORMS

Threads through: real versus manufactured is a running question — the Tower fakes weather, "night", even beauty, so the reader keeps asking what else is staged.

"prickling... tastes rich... plink and sparkle"

Craft: touch, taste and sight layered to stretch one moment right out. **AO2 · SENSORY IMAGERY**

Threads through: beauty is rationed in this world; the writing lingers precisely because Jude is so rarely allowed it — the style enacts the deprivation.

"Now this is beauty!" the Chancellor hums."

Craft: the villain is handed the loveliest setting in the book. **AO2 · CHARACTERISATION / IRONY**

Threads through: power here owns beauty and access — who is allowed to see a real sky is exactly who holds control.

"I wonder who turns off the sky."

Craft: a quiet closing question turns wonder into politics in one line. **AO2 · STRUCTURE / CLOSING LINE**

Threads through: this is the book's method — an ordinary detail (a switch, a smile, a name) exposing total power; hope and resistance begin the moment a character notices it.

Reading like a writer — your turn

Describe something ordinary as if the narrator has never seen it, slowing the moment with all five senses. Then end on a quiet question that turns the beautiful thing political — *who controls it, and how do you know?*

For librarians & reading groups. This is the writing — description that argues. *The Boy I Am* is Carnegie-nominated; more spotlights, reading-group kits and author visits at klkettle.com.