**The Kite Runner**

**A-Level Notes**

**Chapter notes**

**Chapter 1**

* Recalls memories from long ago
* Guilt is shown
* We learn he is anxious and has a dark past
* “*There is a way to be good again*”

**Chapter 2**

* We learn the bond between Amir and Hassan
* Amir seems to be a bit manipulative of Hassan, like an older brother
* Amir lives in a lavish home with Baba whereas Hassan and Ali live in a small mud hut on the grounds
* We learn of Sanaubar, Hassan’s Mother
* Hassan is referred to as ‘*Hazzara’* Soldiers who pass him

**Chapter 3**

* Description of Baba
* Amir’s desire to please Baba is shown
* Baba’s description of the sin “*theft*” and how every other sin is a variation of theft
* “*A child who cannot stand up for himself, will become a man who cannot stand up to anything”* Foreshadows

**Chapter 4**

* Time jumps back to The year Baba was born and tells the story of how Baba and Ali grew up together much like Amir and Hassan
* Reads the story of Rostam and Sohrab to Hassan
* First appearance of the pomegranate tree
* Amir makes up some of the story to Hassan and Hassan says it’s the best one yet
* Amir decides to start writing short stories
* He attempts to show the story to Baba but only Rahim Kahn reads it who tells Amir he has a great talent
* He reads the story to Hassan who outsmarts him and Amir quietly resents him for it

**Chapter 5**

* “*Beginning of the end of the Afghanistan we knew*”
* Communists take over
* Russia invades
* First appearance of Assef
* Baba Has surgery to fix Hassan’s lip

**Chapter 6**

* Talk of kite running
* Large event in Afghanistan
* Hassan is a natural
* Explains how last kite to fall was the trophy of honour

**Chapter 7**

Time and Sequence

* Main event is linear – start to end
* Flashbacks interrupt

Page 64

* Memory “ *Fed from same breast”*, Just before the scene where Hassan is raped, showing his guilt
* Memory “*Fortune teller*”, Give money back to Hassan, always going to happen, Amir justifying and guilty—always going to happen nothing he could have done, “*Rooster crows*” – Biblical reference, betraying of friends
* Dream,
* Flashback– Justify his actions

Characterisation

Hassan

* Hassan shows loyalty, prepared to get raped as he knows how important the kite is to his close friend
* Page 69 –Shadows across his face, metaphorical he has been raped and has to live with it for the rest of his life
* Compared to the sacrificial lamb. Hassan’s face is like the sacrificial lamb, being sacrificed for good reasons.

Amir

* Has got what he wanted, his father’s approval, and forgets about Hassan.
* What happened was meant to happen so that Amir can have a relationship with his father.

*“I felt his glare on me like the heat of a blistering sun”* Icarus representation, Amir is flying too close to the sun, will be his downfall. The sun is needed but can be harmful.

1. **How the Chapter starts with Hassan’s Dream. \*\***
2. **The description of setting during the kite competition and during the assault. \*\***
3. **Imagery created within the chapter. \***
4. **The use of flashback and dreams. \***
5. **The presentation of Hassan Before/After the assault.**
6. **Amir’s honesty at the end of the chapter**
7. **Hassan’s Dream**

* How Hassan views Amir as brave
* Monster= Assef/Baba
* Could he have made it up, trying to give him confidence
* “*There is no monster in the water*” monster is in reality, Assef will get Hassan
* Could have sacrificed himself to the monster
* Hassan is shown as pure so couldn’t have made it up

1. **Setting**

Page 53

* *“Blameless blue”* – foreshadowing, the guilt Amir is feeling is coming out through his narrative and description of the events.
* “*Ali shut the gates behind us*” – Gates represent security.
* “*I heard him mutter a prayer under his breath – he always said a prayer when his son left the house*” Foreshadowing

Page 60

* “*Pink and Purple*” – Darker colours, sky colour is bruised.
* *“Sun had almost sunk”* – Dark, sun not wanting to see the events unfold

The Alley

* Dark
* Enclosed
* Movements are restricted
* Kite = Freedom
* Complete opposite of the crowded street full of joyful children

**Chapter 8**

**How is Amir’s Guilt shown in Chapter Eight?**

* Insomnia
* Struggles to speak with Hassan; He doesn’t want to be in his company
* The Monster in the dream is Amir
* Hassan’s trousers(the image)
* Wants Hassan to punish him
* **Pomegranate tree two**
* Rude to Ali
* Hassan’s chores annoy him
* Asks Baba to kick Ali and Hassan out of the house

**Chapter 9**

* Amir’s Plan to make Hassan leave
* He takes money and hides it under Hassan’s pillow
* Hassan keeps loyal to Amir still and lies for him saying he stole it
* Ali and Hassan leave

**Chapter 10**

* The fuel tank is a representation of Amir’s life. The memory he thinks of, the “*brushstroke of colour on the grey, barren canvas that our lives had become our lives*” is his memory of Hassan, the one glimmer of hope in his life which had become horrible. The fuel tank mirrors this as it is a dark space where Amir feels trapped, as he does in his own head, and the one glimmer of hope in there is his father’s watch

**Chapter 11**

How the setting is presented as different from Kabul?

* Baba and Amir have less money, live in an apartment and don’t seem to have friends or family, complete opposite to Kabul
* Makes Baba ill and aged him, America makes him physically ill “*Smog, traffic noise, pollen*”
* Baba is now doing the hard medial work, of which he would have servants do for them
* High up in Kabul Social hierarchy, Low in America Social hierarchy
* What hurts Baba the most is that his pride is wounded
* No one knew him in America whereas everyone knew him in Kabul and people challenge and question him
* “*For me, America was a place to bury my memories. For Baba, a place to mourn his*”
* Baba is proud of Amir for graduating, second time he is proud of Amir. Baba ruins that by saying “*I wish Hassan was with us today”*
* Baba does not like Amir’s career choice, Amir not giving in “*Last time I had done that I had damned myself”*- Going to hell for what he did as punishment

**Chapter 12**

* Repetition, “*I brought the ball of my hand to my mouth and bit on it*”
* Decline of Baba
* “*His shoulder blade felt like a birds wing under my finger*”
* “*I lifted him up to easily*”

**Chapter 13**

* Amir Back to being punished – Unable to have Children
* “*Meant not to be*”
* “*Wrestling Bears”* Metaphor for bad things in his life Page 152
* Even in the end Baba retaining his dignity and strength of character
* Page 160- Still have Hassan’s Voice “ ‘Someday, ishallah, you will be a great writer’*, he had once said, ‘*and people all over the world will read your stories’*”*

**Chapter 14**

* Back to the beginning of the novel (time and sequence)
* Amir receives call from Rahim Kahn
* Plans to leave

**Chapter 15**

* Amir arrives in Afghanistan to Rahim Kahn
* Brief history of how it has changed with Taliban rule
* We see how ill Rahim Kahn is when he coughs blood into a napkin

**Chapter 16**

* Rahim Kahn’s narrative
* It fills in the ‘gap’ in the narrative about Hassan
* Separates Amir from Afghanistan and his Childhood
* Amir is now ‘Westernised’ He is American now
* Hassan has remained the same
* Hassan has a son- Sohrab
* Sanaubar has been punished

**Chapter 17**

* Hassan dies
* Rahim Kahn gives Amir Hassan’s Letter
* Amir discovers that him and Hassan are brothers
* Rahim Kahn asks Amir to rescue Hassan’s son

**Chapter 18**

* Amir realises the way Baba had been with Hassan, it was clear that he was Baba’s son
* Amir changes his mind and decides that he will rescue Sohrab
* Amir realises that Baba committed the sin he hated, theft when he stole the truth from his sons

Setting

* He is in Pakistan visiting Rahim Kahn
* “*Bloodred sky*” more repetition of the blood at the time where Amir is recognising that him and Hassan share the same blood, it could also represent the bloodshed that is going to happen in upcoming chapters

Characterisation

* “*I’d traced little crow’s-feet etched around the corners of my eyes”* Throughout the novel the image of the crow has been used to symbolise death. Here it is used as a metaphor as though death has walked across his eyes, representing the death he has seen in the novel, and how it is always at the corner of his eye. The image of death in the form of the crow has been repeated at a crucial moment. Another interpretation of this quote is that the ‘crow’s feet’ in his eyes show how much he has aged and despite this the issue with Hassan has not been resolved
* This chapter is the one where Amir needs to make a crucial decision to determine right or wrong

Voice

* Amir’s first person narrative in which the voice of Baba comes out
* “*like father like son*” Amir always thought that he was nothing like Baba but now he realises that they are alike and are both a thief yet brave
* Baba’s opinion and thoughts are strong and there is repetition of what Baba says “*There is only one sin”*

**Chapter 19**

* Amir sets out on his journey to rescue Sohrab
* Amir meets Farid and stays with him and his family
* Amir and Farid have an argument about Amir and whether he belongs in Afghanistan
* Farid agrees to help Amir find Sohrab when he finds out that he is the reason Amir came back to Afghanistan
* Amir has a dream where Hassan is executed in the street, and Amir is the executioner. This shows Amir’s guilt and that he blames himself for Hassan’s death and trauma “*I see the face behind the plume of smoke swirling from the muzzle. I am the man in the herringboned vest*”

**Chapter 20**

* Amir see’s what Afghan is like now, through Farid’s Eyes “*Rubble and beggars. Everywhere I looked that’s what I saw*”
* Amir see’s the Taliban for the first time and is warned by Farid “*Don’t you ever stare at them! Do you understand me? Never!*”
* Amir meets an old beggar who used to know his mother and learns some small details about her, more “*than I ever did from Baba*”
* Amir finds the Orphanage Rahim Kahn tells him that Sohrab is at
* He finds out that the orphanage director has sold Sohrab to a Talib official

Setting

* Scene of destruction more like a hunting ground than a war zone—“*Burned carcasses…*”
* War zone Ominous, they have not yet reached Kabul and there are already scenes of destruction
* “*Charred remains*” there has been fire and we associate fire with hell, presenting Kabul as hell-like
* Children roaming the streets
* Trees have been cut down and burned, it’s like its taking the naturalness and air out of Kabul
* “*Returning to Kabul was like running into an old friend, forgotten friend and seeing that life hadn’t been good to him, that he had become homeless and destitute*”
* “*Giant sand Castle*”
* “*Skeleton*”—Reflect the state of Kabul, rotten and decay

Character

Farid

* Aggressive, instinctive response
* Natural response
* Fights to survive

Zaman

* Runs the orphanage
* Caring
* Complicit in child rape
* Survival

Both deal with it in different ways

Voice

* First time we hear Amir’s mother’s voice, this is shown now as Amir is revisiting his past(shown as a safe place)

Time and Sequence

* “*He’s great with the slingshot*” Retrospective narrative—Foreshadowing

Point of View

* “*And now I was seeing it through Farid’s eyes*”

**Chapter 21**

* Amir returns to his old home and finds it to be nothing like how he remembered, “*Like so much else in Kabul, my father’s hose was the picture of fallen splendour*”
* He then visits the Pomegranate tree and reads the words him and Hassan put there years ago
* Amir watches a stoning to which he discovers the man who has taken Sohrab and arranges a meeting with him

**Chapter 22**

* Amir has his meeting with the Talib official and sees Sohrab
* He finds out that the Talib is Assef who has raped and made a fool of Sohrab
* Amir and Assef have a fight, yet Amir laughs out loud when he is beaten for getting the punishment he deserves
* Sohrab breaks up the fight by firing a ball from his slingshot into Assef’s eye, making him the one eyed Assef that Hassan threatened to do.
* Amir and Farid finally rescue Sohrab

Significance of **Chapter 22**

References to past events

* Sohrab has a slingshot, like father like son
* Amir takes his punishment Hassan and the pomegranates
* Amir feels at peace when he is being beaten up, draws a parallel with him and Assef
* He gets a split lip, just like Hassan
* Sohrab’s eyes, are like slaughtered lamb, this reference was used for Hassan
* Hassan and Sohrab both victims of the same person
* Ethnic cleansing, it links to Assef’s childhood and how he idolised Hitler
* *“Chinese doll face of my childhood”*
* Brass knuckles
* Bells on Sohrab are like the bells on the monkey man Amir and Hassan used to watch as a child
* Zoomorphism—Characters referred to as very animal like
* Assef still has control over his parents
* Assef pushes Sohrab and his shirt stains purple with grape juice, like Hassan’s with pomegranate juice

Imagery

*“His name rose from the deep and I didn’t want to say it, as if uttering it might conjure him”*

* Conjuring like the devil, Assef is represented as very evil
* From the deep like the monster in Hassan’s dream

“*I felt at peace”*

**Chapter 23**

* Amir Was taken to hospital and wakes up confused
* Amir finds out he has a cut on his upper lip, and will have a scar just like Hassan
* Rahim Khans letter reads that he knew that Amir saw Hassan be raped
* Amir tries to get closer to Sohrab, plays cards with him like he did with Hassan but Sohrab still seems distant
* Amir gets out of hospital

**Chapter 24**

* Farid leaves to go home and Amir and Sohrab stay in a hotel
* When Amir wakes up he discovers that Sohrab has ran off
* Amir finds Sohrab, gives him the photo of Hassan and offers to take him to live in America with him
* Amir tries to get a legal permission to adopt Sohrab and take him to America but it doesn’t go very well
* Whilst Amir has to sort out taking Sohrab to America he has to put him in an orphanage and Sohrab does not take the news well
* Sohrab tries to kill himself by cutting his own wrists and Amir finds him in a pool of blood in the bathroom late at night

**Chapter 25**

* Sohrab gets taken to hospital and Amir visits and prays for him
* Amir decides to take Sohrab to America anyway, even though he hasn’t decided whether he wants to go or not
* Sohrab hardly speaks to anyone anymore
* Amir defends Sohrab when his father-in-law calls him “*Hazzara boy*”
* There is a kite fighting tournament in America and Amir buys a kite and flies it with Sohrab
* One of the kites gets cut down and Amir asks if Sohrab want him to run it for him, Sohrab nodded and Amir replies “*For you a thousand times over*”
* “*That last thought had brought no sting with it*” Guilt has gone
* Amir is like Baba in this chapter,
  + He stand up for him and his family
  + Helps build a hospital works similar to Baba
* “*I wished time would stand still*” Personification of time, he is happy and has found redemption
* “*The last time I had felt a rush like this was that day in the winter of 1975*” page 323 direct reference to chapter & in a positive aspect
* Page 322-323 description of his childhood, he can think about his childhood without feeling guilty
* Guilt has disappeared from him and therefore from his narrative
* Page 318 “*I didn’t have to consult the prayer pamphlet I had obtained from the mosque anymore; the verses came naturally now, effortlessly*.” He is embracing his past and his Afghan culture
* “*A crow cawed and I looked up*” 322—Image of death, Amir accepts that death is a part of life

**Exam Questions and Preparation**

**In what way does Hosseini present events in Chapter Seven ‘The Kite Runner’?**

Hosseini presents events in chapter seven in a range of different ways. The chapter begins with Hassan sharing his dream with Amir “ “-

* My interpretation “I think”
* Alternative interpretation “However”

Another way Hosseini presents events in chapter 7 is…

* My interpretation “I think”
* Alternative Interpretation “However”

**How is Hosseini’s use of the pomegranate tree *significant* in the narrative?**

* *Significant* = important

**1st Appearance—pg24**

* The first reference to the pomegranate tree is when Amir and Hassan are children. They go up the hill to the graveyard where the pomegranate tree grows and eat its fruit and play in its shade. This represents a safe place of peace for the boys to play when they are children so they carve the words “*Amir and Hassan, Sultans of Kabul”* intoit .This pomegranate is also a representation of their friendship, and the sweetness of the pomegranates represents the sweetness of their friendship. However Amir says, “*The tree was ours”* The tree belongs to Amir and Hassan. However they are playing in a graveyard and do not seem to have an awareness of death which shows their innocence. Also the description of the pomegranate as ‘*Blood red’* is rather negative and blood has connotations of death. The appearance of the Pomegranate tree could foreshadow events in the novel.
* There is also the imagery of the tree which is important, a tree grows and has deep roots which could represent Hassan and Amir’s connection. Also at this point the tree is strong and healthy which could represent Afghanistan

**2nd Appearance—pg80**

* The second reference is when Amir is throwing the Pomegranates at Hassan asking him to throw them back at him. This shows that he craves punishment for the things that he has done. Also when the pomegranates are breaking, it represents their friendship breaking apart. The quote “*I stood and picked up an overripe pomegranate that had fallen from the tree”* Relates to Hassan who is overly loyal to Amir yet he seems to be the one to fall. When Hassan smashes a pomegranate to his forehead it foreshadows the way that he dies. The imagery of the juice of the pomegranate is described as blood, which foreshadows Hassan’s death also. The tree also has changed from a place of innocence and safety, to a place where Amir’s guilt emerges and the atmosphere is hostile.

**3rd Appearance—pg230**

* The final appearance of the pomegranate tree is when Amir is older and re visits it as an adult. The first thing that is different from the previous two appearances of the pomegranate tree is that Amir is alone when he goes up to it. Also he finds it difficult to climb the hill whereas as a child he would run up it with Hassan at ease. The tree has no longer born fruit and is close to dying, representing Amir’s memories, still there but no longer filled with joy. The names are still etched into the bark showing that the connection between them still exists even after Hassan has died. There is repetition of how Amir is sitting cross legged, as though he wants everything to change back to the way it was.
* The pomegranate tree is referred to in the Qur’an as bearing one of the fruits of the ‘Garden of paradise’. This is represented in its first appearance. Its later reappearance suggests a fall from paradise in its barren state.

**In what way does Hosseini present events in Chapter Seven ‘The Kite Runner’? What interests you about the presentation?**

\*\*\*Refer to the **Chapter Notes** section, **Chapter Seven**\*\*\*

**Analyse the ways of telling in Chapter….**

**\*\*\***Apply any Chapter to this and refer to the **Chapter Notes** section\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*Attached should be some essay answers to these questions\*\*\*\*

**Character Notes**

**Main Characters**

* **Amir—Main character/Narrator**
* **Baba—Amir’s Father**
* **Ali—Family servant/Baba’s friend**
* **Hassan—Ali’s son/ Hassan’s Friend**
* **Assef—Main bully/ evil character**
* **Sohrab—Hassan’s son**
* **Rahim Kahn—Baba’s friend**
* **Soraya—Amir’s wife**

Hassan– Amir’s Description

* Made by a skilled craftsman
* *“Perfectly”*
* Described as expensive *“Sapphire”*, *“Gold”*
* Sounds precious
* Transcends Humans
* One imperfection (Physical)
* Seen as lesser being
* Incapable of causing pain or suffering
* Close bond with Amir

Baba

* Very tall man
* Many stories are told about him
* He is a very hard working man and is very determined
* He is rather like a Bear according to Amir
* He is both terrifying and marvellous
* He still grieves over Amir’s mothers death
* He loved Amir’s Mother
* He lost his father when he was young
* He is not a very affectionate man
* People are very intimidated of him yet look up to him
* He may resent Amir for causing the death of his beloved wife
* He has proved everyone wrong when the have doubted him
* He despises the teachers that Amir has
* He is also quite close with Hassan
* He hates America to begin with
* He is proud of Amir when he proposes to marry Soraya

Amir

**Amir vs Baba, how are they presented as opposites?**

Amir

* Loves poetry/Literature
* Not violent
* Not very athletic
* Is inquisitive
* Has a dislike and no interest in soccer like Baba
* Creative
* Studious
* “S*omething missing in that boy”*

Baba

* Loves soccer
* Stand up for himself
* Intimidating
* Athletic
* Does not think boys should be reading poetry
* Business-minded
* Hands on

Assef

* Insane
* Without remorse
* Overtly Racist -Very against other ethnicities in Afghanistan
* Hates Hazzaras
* Well known reputation for hurting others
* *“Sociopath”*
* *“Stainless-steel brass knuckles”* Knuckle Dusters
* Savage
* Towers over others
* Powerful
* Controlling
* Henchmen –Wali & Kamal
* Spoilt
* Opinionated
* Presented as a feared evil Lord, Physically intimidating
* Presented in a spiritual way
* Religious terminology
* Aryan half German
* Hitler is his idol
* Disturbed

First appearance page 33

**How is Hosseini’s use of the pomegranate tree *significant* in the narrative?**

The use of the pomegranate tree throughout The Kite Runner is significant to portray the developing storyline. The tree represents many things throughout the narrative such as the friendship between Hassan and Amir, the death of important characters and the state of Afghanistan at the time of each appearance of the tree.

The first appearance of the tree is in the beginning of the novel on page24 to show us how the characters and setting in the story is going to begin. The first time the tree is mentioned is when Amir and Hassan run up to it as children to play in its shade and eat its fruit. The tree is represented as a safe place here for the two children to play in peace and tranquillity. However it is described to be at the edge of a cemetery, and the obliviousness the boys show to the prospect of death and the cemetery shows their innocence. The connotations of the cemetery are death and could foreshadow future deaths that occur in the novel as the tree is rather like a gravestone.

The first appearance of the tree also shows to us the bond and friendship between Amir and Hassan. The two boys make an inscription on the tree that says *“Amir and Hassan sultans of Kabul”*. The fact that it is marked into the tree shows how the boys think this makes their friendship official. It also shows how they have marked the tree as their own and it belongs to them, as when people mark their name on something it is like taking ownership of it. This again shows the close bond the boys have and suggests that they will keep this bond. One interpretation of the pomegranates is that they are described as ‘sweet’ which could represent the sweetness of their friendship. However another description of the juice of the pomegranate was that it was ‘blood red’ which has connotations of death, so another interpretation could be that the pomegranates signify death. The imagery of the tree is also important as a tree grows and has deep roots, which is a link to Hassan’s and Amir’s connection. Also at this point the tree is strong and healthy which could represent the strong position Afghanistan is in.

The second appearance of the tree is on page 80, after Hassan has been raped. The appearance of three here is significant as it represents Amir’s and Hassan’s friendship and in this chapter their friendship start to fall apart. Amir and Hassan again climb the tree but the atmosphere is tense and hostile, which is different to the easy childish atmosphere that was presented the first time representing how their friendship is no long childish and easy but tense. Amir begins to pelt Hassan with pomegranates from the tree, asking for him to hit back. This shows how desperately Amir wants punishment for leaving his friend in a time of need. Also, in relation to my previous point of the sweetness of the pomegranates representing their friendship, the breaking of the pomegranates in this chapter represents how the friendship between the boys is broken too. Also the quote “*I stood and picked up an overripe pomegranate that had fallen from the tree”* is significant as the pomegranate here could represent Hassan, who is overly loyal yet he is the one who always seems to fall. However another interpretation of this is that it represents Amir, who is the overly entitled half of Baba yet he seems to have born all the guilt from Baba also. Hassan refuses to hit Amir back and instead smashes a pomegranate to his head, proving how loyal he is to Amir that he would sacrifice himself instead of hurting Amir. This also relates to my previous point of the pomegranate representing death, an is foreshadowing the death of Hassan, and in fact he is shot in the head just as the pomegranate is crushed on his head and drips like ‘blood’. The tree has now changed to a place where Amir’s guilt emerges and the friendship breaks down. The tree, which represents the friendship between the boys, no longer bears fruit after this chapter, as after this chapter the friendship has gone and dead.

The final appearance of the tree in the narrative is on page 230, after Amir is a grown man and has left Kabul and moved to America. Amir revisits the broken Afghanistan to save Hassan’s son and goes to see the pomegranate tree for the last time. The tree is old and lifeless, and this could represent the state of Afghanistan at the time. With the first appearance Afghanistan was strong, as was the tree, however now Afghanistan is in a terrible state just like the tree. The biggest difference of this appearance to the other two appearances is that Amir visits the tree alone. This is how Amir has been feeling at this time so it is a clear representation of his thoughts and feelings. Also he struggles up the hill whereas he and Hassan used to climb it at ease showing that it is difficult for him to revisit his past. Amir visiting the pomegranate tree is rather like when a family member visits the grave of a loved one, as the tree shows a comparison to a grave in the graveyard with an inscription on it. The tree is still there however it has no longer born fruit and is close to dying, representing Amir’s memories, still there but no longer filled with joy and difficult to revisit. Also the names still remain etched into the bark showing that the connection between Amir and Hassan still exists even after Hassan has died, and that the connection will always exist between them. There is repletion used in this chapter, when Amir visits the tree he sits cross legged, as he did as a child. This is as though he wishes everything to change back to the way it was when he was a child and happy. The pomegranate tree is referred to in the Qur’an as bearing one of the fruits of the ‘Garden of paradise’. This is represented in its first appearance when it is lush and full of life. However in its final appearance with its barren lifeless state, it suggests a fall from paradise which is shown within the storyline in Amir’s loss of innocence and happiness.

**Analyse the Ways of Telling in Chapter 20**

Throughout chapter 20 there is lots of imagery used without to convey the horror and memories Amir sees when he revisits Kabul. Setting is predominately used in this chapter to give a picture of war and hell. On the way to Kabul Amir and Farid see “burned carcasses” and “charred remains”. This suggests that there has been a fire, which we associate with hell, presenting Kabul as evil and hell like. Also the word “carcasses” is used; making it sound like it’s more like a hunting ground than a war zone, showing that he Taliban that are destroying it are like animals without mercy. These scenes of destruction are ominous, as Amir and Farid have not yet reached Kabul yet they are already seeing streets laden with fear and signs of destruction

When Amir and Farid arrive in Kabul they are greeted with a terrible sight, with “Children roaming the streets”. Children are helpless and innocent and should be protected, yet in Kabul they are on the streets unprotected and vulnerable. As at this time there is a lot of war and conflict the children would have lost their father who would be taken away to fight, making his scene of devastation more upsetting and making us feel sympathy. Also Amir notices that the trees have been cut down and burnt. Taking the trees out of Kabul is like taking the very air and naturalness out of it, representing Kabul as being an unnatural place. “Returning to Kabul was like running into an old friend, forgotten friend and seeing that life hadn’t been good to him, that he had become homeless and destitute”, this is the way Amir describes returning to Kabul, represent the difference that time has brought to it. The point of view slightly changes here with Amir as he says “now I was seeing it through Farid’s eyes” , we see Farid’s view of Kabul, rather than the memories that Amir had of it

A juxtaposition of character is shown in this chapter between the characters Farid and Zaman; however there is also a similarity between them, as all both want to do is survive. However Farid is aggressive in the way that he fights to survive and follows his natural response, especially when he reacts to Zaman’s confession that he allows child rape. Zaman’s way of surviving is to just stay in the background and chooses the lesser of two evils. However Zaman is caring as he goes out of his way to look after the orphans, yet he is complicit in child rape to keep him and others alive. In this way both of the men are complete opposites in the way they deal with situations, however their intentions and their caring nature are the same.

In this chapter we also hear Amir’s mother’s voice for the first time, from a homeless man who once knew her. This reflects how Amir is revisiting his past. His mother is described to him and he hangs on to the little bit of his past he has left. Another interpretation of this is that Amir is finding out things about his own life and this is following the pattern. This also makes a reference to time and sequence. Another reference to time and sequence is when Zaman says “he great with a slingshot” this both links Hassan and Sohrab as father and son, and foreshadows the later chapter in which Sohrab uses the slingshot on Assef