

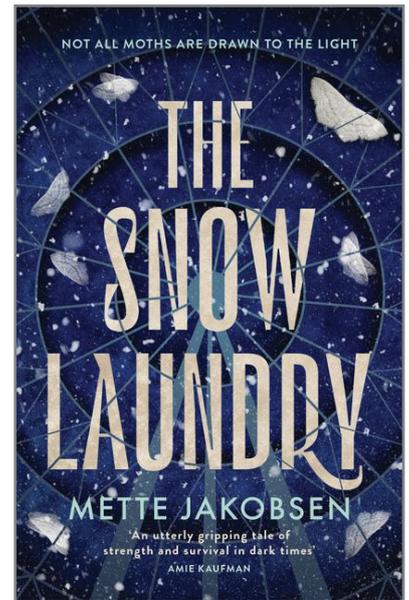
# The Towers #1: The Snow Laundry

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**RECOMMENDED FOR:** Upper Secondary  
(Violence, Sexual content, Drug/alcohol references)



## SYNOPSIS

Sixteen-year-old Ally is one of 400 homeless young people who have been promised new and better lives in exchange for their votes.

The once homeless children and teenagers are now warm and fed. But they are forced to work for the new administration—and their new home is really a prison.

When Ally's boyfriend Bon vanishes into thin air, her search for him leads her to discovering that the homeless kids are really lab rats intended for scientific testing. And as Ally delves deeper into her search for Bon, she learns the frightening truth behind his disappearance.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Originally from Denmark, Mette Jakobsen now resides in Sydney. She is an adventurer, author and playwright. Mette has a PhD in Creative Writing and has graduated from NIDA's Playwright Studio. Her novels have been shortlisted for the Commonwealth Book Prize, topped the Indie Book List, and mentioned on Oprah's Booklist. Mette has taught creative writing at universities and several of her plays have been broadcast on ABC Radio National.

## STUDY NOTES

- When you read through this text think about the way the author uses the setting and the internal conflict of the protagonist to invite the reader into the story. Think about the choices the author makes to position the audience to be sympathetic to Ally.
  - What is the weather and overall setting like? How does it add to the overall mood or tone? Does the weather and setting add to the mood? In what way?
  - Write down three examples of sensory detail. How do they make you feel? What do they tell you about the world?
  - What images, metaphors or words stick with you? How do they make you feel?
  - What parts of the world seems familiar? What seems unfamiliar? Why? What do you think is going to happen?
  - What internal conflict does the protagonist Ally have to deal with? How does this add to the tension in the story? What are the features and characteristics of Ally that make readers like or empathise with her? What is her journey over the course of the novel—is it a journey to consciousness about her world? What is the journey for

the reader as well? What is the relationship between the reader and narrative?

- Writers use pathetic fallacy to add to the atmosphere in a text. Pathetic fallacy is where the weather in the story mirrors the emotion of the scene or the people in it. For example, when it is very hot, humid and sticky the characters can be agitated or when it is foggy, mystery and suspense is evoked. The effect of pathetic fallacy is that it adds atmosphere to the writing and gives clues or foreshadows to the reader that something terrible is coming. It sustains interest, creates tension and surprise and is used to position the audience to feel concern for the protagonist. Find examples of pathetic fallacy and other literary techniques such as metaphors and sensory detail throughout the novel and explain the feelings they evoke in the reader.
- After you have finished reading the book—what do you think the author is concerned about? What feature of contemporary life is Mette Jakobsen commenting on? Write a 500 word paragraph and how she has used the dystopian setting and authorial voice to comment on contemporary society and position the audience to be receptive to what she has to say.
- Using this novel as inspiration, plan and write a 500-word opening scene of your own dystopian novel. Choose a central theme from the following:
  - Government control
  - Environmental destruction
  - Loss of individual freedom
  - Survival of the fittest—decimation of the population
  - Technological control.
    - Determine what is your purpose. What comment do you want to make about present day society?
    - Create a protagonist who has a deep inner conflict—think about the characteristics you can add to make the character interesting to the reader.
    - Establish the setting of your story—mix references to the present day and the future. Make sure it is an oppressive, corrupt world.
    - Start the story with conflicting internal feelings of the protagonist. Appeal to emotion, reason and ethics. Think about where the protagonist will be going in your story – what is their journey to consciousness?
    - Use sensory detail, colours, pathetic fallacy, a simile, a metaphor, personification, powerful verbs and a variety of sentence shapes to lift your writing and draw in the reader.