

The Lycanthrope Fun-Time Activity Book

by Kirsty Logan

he'd thought if he could peel back his tissue of skin
then he would understand the words that the wind
hissed into his pointing ears; he would know
the purpose of his thickening nails, the pointed ends
of his eyelashes — and the way that he could use
these malformations to find himself another boy

who was more like himself; an elongating boy
with butter-yellow flecks in his eyes, and skin
patched like a tabby. for many months he used
to climb to the roof clothed in scraps of wind
and tilt his body to the empty sky, but by the end
of the moon and his keening breath, he knows

that answers are always in the body. he knows,
still, that he must find this other mirror-boy
because his own body is no solution: the final end
of this quest is to peel back the unfamiliar skin
of this other boy, the one who heard the wind
and its missives, its curses. this boy can be used

like a fortune-teller's glass ball; can be used
instead of thrown knucklebones. he only knows
this much, but it is enough. in his ears the wind
hisses *yessssss*. it lifts him, flesh and bones. the boy
does not like the city flowing beneath him; his skin
shivers towards shadows, but he knows that the end

will justify these means. he thinks only of the end

to stop the lights from blurring to a vortex. he can use
the imagined scent, the dream-soft feel of new skin
to calm his breath. lifetimes later, a boy. he knows
beyond knowing anything else that this is the boy,
the one, the answer. his feet touch ground; the wind

hisses away. he never trusted the strength of the wind,
but he misses it now. never mind: here is his answer, his end.
he slinks, courts, kisses, pounces. when opened, the boy
reveals an infinity of colours, shapes, scents. he can use
these to divine entire worlds. he is giddy with knowing.
he peels back the final scrap of the other boy's skin.

yesssss says the wind, and he sees it's no use:
here is his end and there's nothing to know.
a brand new boy leaps from the skin.

