

The Cement Garden – Julie

Her looks

“Julie had a high ridge cheekbone beneath her eyes which gave her the deep look of some **rare wild animal**. In the electric light her eyes were black and big.” (11)

Julie wants to be “a famous athlete” (15).

She is **very athletic**: “During the following year Julie trained a lot for the school athletics team. She already held the local **under-eighteen** records for the 100- and 220-yard sprint. She could run faster than anyone I knew.” (20)

She has got “pale-brown, slim legs” (20).

She is beautiful and worries about her looks a lot: “In the evenings she often stayed at home to wash her hair and iron the pleats in her navy-blue school skirt. [...] She had a clean white blouse five days a week. [...] Some mornings she gathered her hair at the nape of her neck with a brilliant white ribbon. All this took considerable preparation each evening.” (20-21)

Julie “lived in the separate world of those who are, and secretly know they are, **exceptionally beautiful**” (23-24).

“She wore make-up and had all kinds of secrets.” (29)

Julie is about **seventeen**: “My mother remembered a party we had on Julie’s tenth birthday. [...] [Jack] was eight.” (34)

“She was wearing a bright-green bikini. In one hand she held a magazine and in the other her sunglasses.” (41)

“Julie was anxious to be sun-tanned” (43)

“Each day she spread out her bath towel for an hour after school. She would lie with her hands and fingers flattened on the ground beside her, and every ten minutes or so she turned over on to her belly, hooking loose with her thumbs her bikini straps. She liked to set off her deepening colour with a white school blouse.” (43)

Her character

“She was one of a handful of **daring** girls at school [...]. She wore stockings and black knickers, [which was] strictly forbidden.” (20)

“She had boyfriends at school, but she never really let them get near her.” (21)

“Her closest friends were girls, the most **rebellious**, the ones with reputations. [...], she **dominated her group** and heightened her reputation with a disruptive, intimidating quietness.” (21)

“It was true, she was **shy** [...]” (23)

“Julie was more **remote** now.” (29)

“She was suddenly so remote from us, quiet, **certain of her authority**.” (32)

“Julie appeared **serious and efficient**” (42)

Julie as their mother

As mother more frequently goes to bed early in the evening it “left Julie in charge of supper and bedtime.” (31)

“Julie made [Tom] eat everything on his plate, and he was not permitted to crawl under the table or make funny noises.” (32)

“Julie made [Tom] stop [fooling around] after a while.” (38)