

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

THE SNOW HARE

by Paula Lichtarowicz

Spoiler Alert: Discussion questions to be read after finishing the novel

1. *The Snow Hare* explores how memories can haunt us throughout our lives. Why does Lena see the little girl and the “bone man” in her final days? Were you surprised by who these characters turned out to be?
2. How do you feel about Lena’s character? Did you like her? Does that matter? Is she a different woman at the end than she was as a child in Poland?
3. One of the novel’s central questions is how much control we wield over our own lives. To what extent does Lena have agency? What happens when an external force – such as war – deprives us of our own choices? What do you think motivates Lena to keep going?
4. On p. 279 Lena tells Grigori “Everything matters or nothing matters.” What does she mean? Do you agree?
5. How does the novel explore romantic love? Do you think Lena loves Anton? How does meeting Grigori change her? Do you think she makes the right choice, in the end?
6. Discuss the novel’s title and the scene on p. 281. What does the snow hare mean to Lena?

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7. On p. 261, Lena's mother says, "I'm thinking about your father. How that man loved to lie in the sun. Yet he burned a strip off his nose every time. . . . Do you think anyone ever learns anything in life?" What does she mean? Why do you think she says this now? Do the characters in *The Snow Hare* learn something?
8. Discuss the portrayal of motherhood in the novel. Are some mothers better than others? Is that a fair question? Do you think motherhood changes Lena?
9. *The Snow Hare* is inspired, in part, by the author's grandmother's life. Do these real roots change how you read the novel? And is there a story in your own family that has shaped how you understand history?
10. In 2023, after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Eastern Europe is again at war. How do today's circumstances compare to those of World War II? Did reading *The Snow Hare* change your perception of these circumstances?
11. As a child, Lena dreams of becoming a doctor, but her life takes a very different course. What did you dream of being as a child? How has that played out for you?
12. Were you surprised by how the novel ended? What did you hope would happen?