

The Taste of Hunger

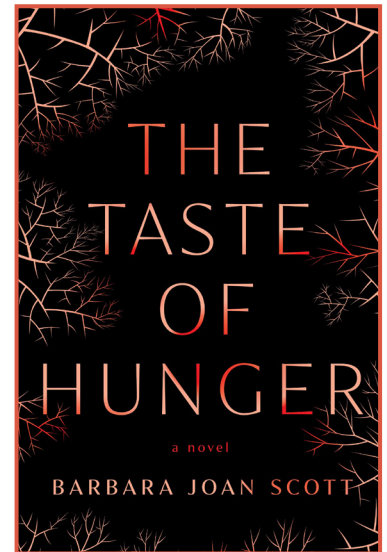
Discussion Questions

1. What do you make of the title, *The Taste of Hunger*? What kinds of hunger are being explored in the novel? What do each of the main characters hunger for? To what extent are their hungers satisfied?
2. Given the previous question, what role does actual food play in the novel?
3. Did you learn aspects of Canadian and/or Ukrainian history you hadn't known before? (For example, Fort San and the tuberculosis epidemic; the Holodomor, the Great Hunger engineered by Stalin in the Ukraine; the racism that confronted the Ukrainian immigrants of the late 1800s and early 1900s.) Many of the historical references are made in passing. Did they inspire you to discover more on your own? If so, what did you look into?
4. The story is told through multiple points of view. Why do you think the author made this choice? What is the effect?
5. What role do the Baba Yaga tales play in the novel, especially their effect on June? Did you notice other references to fairy tales? What do you make of the links between Varvara, Baba Yaga, and the author's first name?
6. Would you say the book is historical fiction or mystery? Is there a point where it shifts? And does it matter?
7. Would you call the novel feminist? How much autonomy do the women achieve within their limited spheres and how?
8. What do you make of Taras's sacrifice and the final scenes between him and Olena?
9. What did the epigraphs contribute to your understanding of or response to the novel?
10. Do you think June ever remembers what happened on fair night?



BARBARA JOAN SCOTT'S

first book, *The Quick*, won the City of Calgary W.O. Mitchell Book Prize and the Howard O'Hagan Award for Best Collection of Short Fiction, and was shortlisted for the Henry Kreisel Award for Best First Book. In 2015 she received the Lois Hole Award for Editorial Excellence. *The Taste of Hunger* is her debut novel. She lives in Calgary.



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