



The Widows of Braxton County

By Jess McConkey
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Questions for Discussion

1. *The Widows of Braxton County* focuses on two central characters. In what ways do you think Kate's life runs parallel to Hannah's? How do their lives differ?
2. What is your first impression of Kate? Does it change by the end of the book? What impact do Doris and Rose have on your perception of Kate?
3. What is your impression of Hannah? Was there anything she could have done to change her life? Do you think that she ever loved her husband?
4. Do you believe the Krause family was cursed? If so, where did the curse originate? Discuss the difference between a curse and a haunting. Was the Krause home haunted, and if so, by whom? How much do you think that Trudy knew about her family's history?
5. Did Trudy deliberately place the knife instrumental in Joe's death in Kate's vehicle? Did she want Kate blamed for his death?
6. Joe is incredibly attached to his mother. Was Joe's attachment to Trudy justified? How do such strong attachments form?
7. In the beginning, Kate struggles to be the "perfect wife." Why do you think it was so important to her to please both Joe and Trudy?
8. How does Kate's relationship with her grandmother shape the other relationships in her life?
9. How does the quote "The Sins of the Father" resonate throughout the story?
10. Does Hannah's stepson Joseph have any redeeming qualities? How was his personality shaped by growing up in an abusive household? Was there justice for the crimes that Joseph committed?
11. One act of violence, the murder of Jacob, has shaped many lives throughout the generations. How did it affect Hannah? Willie? Joseph? Essie? Rose?
12. In the end, did Hannah triumph over her adversaries? If she did, is it important for the townspeople to know?