

READ GLOBAL BOOK GROUP

The Removed by Brandon Hobson

Questions

(Adapted from questions by Books-A-Million)

1. In the novel's prologue, Ray-Ray and Edgar are playing together as children for what will be the last time. Edgar wants to build a monster out of Legos. Ray-Ray tells him, "There are enough monsters in this world." Are there any monsters in this novel?
2. Many different elements of nature and the environment come up throughout the novel. Do you think each of us is connected to the natural world? What role do you think our environment plays in our ability to heal and understand grief?
3. Edgar travels by train to a place called the Darkening Land, where he meets a past acquaintance named Jackson. What do you think the Darkening Land represents?
4. Ernest and Maria think that Ray-Ray and Wyatt might somehow be linked. What do you think the connection between them might be?
5. Sonya's relationship with Vin is a strained and ultimately violent one. Why do you think she would be drawn to the family that killed her brother? Who do you think has more power in the relationship?
6. How do you think Ernest's fluctuating memory affects the way he experiences grief throughout the novel? Do you think it is important to actively remember and reflect upon the painful moments of the past? How does the act of remembering the dead affect those still living?
7. Tsala, a departed spirit, narrates the tragedy of the Trail of Tears throughout the novel. How would you describe Tsala's relationship to the Echota family? Did any of the folktales Tsala tells stand out to you?
8. How would you describe each of the characters' transformations over the course of the novel?
9. When Sonja, Ernest, and Maria attend Ray-Ray's memorial, they notice a figure coming towards them in the darkness. Who or what do you think the figure represents in the novel's final moments?
10. The last word of *The Removed* is "home," and the novel questions what this concept means for those who have been forcibly separated from their homeland. Do you think the characters' senses of home change over the course of the book?

Explore

"Author Brandon Hobson on His New Novel, *The Removed*," interview with Ailsa Chang on All Things Considered (NPR), February 2, 2021.

<https://www.npr.org/2021/02/02/963361391/author-brandon-hobson-on-his-new-novel-the-removed>.

"Brandon Hobson on Recovering Cherokee Myths from His Grandfather's Notebook,"
Literary Hub, December 11, 2018. <https://lithub.com/brandon-hobson-on-recovering-choerokee-myth-from-his-grandfathers-notebook/>

This Land podcast, <https://crooked.com/podcast-series/this-land>. A documentary podcast about Indian Law, sovereignty and civil rights, hosted by Cherokee activist Rebecca Nagle.

Path Lit by Lightning: The Life of Jim Thorpe by David Maraniss, 2022 [B THORPE]

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