



BONE GAP

LAURA
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ABOUT THE BOOK

Bone Gap is the story of Roza, a beautiful girl who is taken from a quiet mid-western town and imprisoned by a mysterious man, and Finn, the only witness, who cannot forgive himself for being unable to identify her kidnapper. As we follow them through their melancholy pasts, their terrifying presents, and their uncertain futures, acclaimed author Laura Ruby weaves a heartbreaking tale of love and loss, magic and mystery, regret and forgiveness—a story about how the face the world sees is never the sum of who we are.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does Finn carry the most guilt about Roza's disappearance?
2. How does Roza's disappearance affect the relationship between Sean and Finn?
3. Why do you think Babcia is so insistent that Roza leave Poland? What hopes does she have for Roza in America? Is Roza better off having gone to America?
4. What does Roza notice about Sean and Finn that is different from the other men she's encountered? Do you think Babcia would call Sean and Finn *golobki*? Why or why not?
5. How are Petey and Roza similar despite their very different physical appearances and backgrounds?
6. Why do you think Roza befriends the beast she names Rus?
7. On p. 123, in reference to the abusive relationships that Roza witnesses and experiences, Roza says, "The story hadn't changed. Only the costumes. Only the players." What does she mean by this? In what ways has the story stayed the same? In what ways has it changed?
8. Do you agree or disagree with Petey's assumption that Finn likes her only because his face blindness prevents him from truly seeing her?
9. What is the significance of the title, *Bone Gap*? How does the town of Bone Gap become a character in the story?
10. The people of Bone Gap say Finn is spacey, Petey is ugly, Sean is the golden boy, and Roza is beautiful. In what way are these labels problematic? How do they influence these characters' perceptions of themselves and the townspeople's perceptions of them?
11. Roza tells Finn that "People look, they don't see" (p. 189). In what ways are the people of Bone Gap blind? How did your impressions of the novel's characters change as you learned more about them?
12. Finn notices that people in Bone Gap tend to ask the wrong questions. What are some of the questions they should have been asking as the story progressed?
13. Consider the role beauty plays for men and women in *Bone Gap*. Finn is said to be more attractive than Sean, yet Sean is the one the town loves. Roza is beautiful and is kidnapped for her beauty, while Petey is said to be ugly and is ridiculed for it. Why do you think that is? Are men and women held to similar beauty ideals where you live? Explain.
14. Finn tells Sean, "Yeah, you gave up. And you keep doing it. You tell yourself it's for other people, but it's not" (p. 273). What things did Sean give up for other people in his life? In what ways did he also give up on himself?
15. How does Roza ultimately become *more* beautiful by the end of the novel, despite the scar on her face?

