

Daughters of the Marionettes

1. "Daughters of the Marionettes" is a story about family tragedies, the impact of the past on our lives and people's secrets. Do you think it is a common thing that families and people in general have secrets they do not talk about?
2. How do you think it affects people and families not to talk openly about certain things?
3. Mariana, her sisters and her mother have experienced a tragedy. What are the reasons for them having managed as well as they have?
4. What keeps them together?
5. How would you describe Mariana? Her sisters? Her mother?
6. Everything changes in this small village when Amnon Goldstein arrives and begins to talk about events that have been kept in the dark. How is a community affected when something like this happens? Are we good in collectively repressing things we do not want to acknowledge? How common is this?
7. In this village, Gypsies and Jews have been discriminated against, much because of the sentiments arisen during The Second World War. What does it look like today? Are there parallels? Differences?
8. The book tells the story of a lawyer who cared for Jewish refugees and helped them in their need, even in a situation when he did not know if the money he sent would reach its destination. What are the characteristics of a person like that? Why do some people more than others seem to realize what is going on and act accordingly?
9. There have always been collaborators who neither take part nor protest when somebody else is being hurt. What characterizes people like that? Have you yourself been in a situation when somebody else was being treated badly and you chose to act? Or not to act? What made you make the decision you made?
10. What can we learn from history? Can we learn from history at all?
11. Mariana is the owner of an old fashioned toy shop where she also sells marionettes. Have you ever watched a marionette theatre? Do you like it?
12. Some people find marionettes scary while other find them fascinating. Why so?
13. Mariana is plagued by the fact that she is not happy in her marriage and has fallen in love with somebody else. Why do you think she fell in love with Ivo? What has she been missing?

14. Jan, the owner of the stable of the village, has a tragic past as well. What do you think of Jan? Why does he act the way he does? Does he change during the book?
15. What meaning do horses have for this story? On carousels and in reality?