



## Book Club Questions

### The City of Widows by Nadia Hashimi

#### Spoiler Alert

The discussion questions below contain spoilers and are intended for readers who have finished **City of Widows**. If you haven't finished the book yet, we recommend coming back after you've turned the final page.

1. How does Marjan's history of changing identities—from Rahima to bacha posh to Marjan - affect how she reacts to the threat of losing her freedom again? Which role best prepared her for her current journey?
2. What challenges does Soraya face as a leader of an all-female combat unit, and how do her family dynamics contribute to her struggles?
3. As the book summary suggests, each woman in the book reacts differently to crisis: fight, flight, or a third way. Which response did you find most realistic, and did your feelings change as the story progressed?
4. The book shows women facing dangers from both the state and the men in their lives, like Marjan's warlord husband and Soraya's unsupportive brother. What does this say about the sources of women's vulnerability?
5. How does the sudden loss of women's rights - from roles like newscasters, doctors, and soldiers to being confined and erased from public life - affect each character's sense of self, not just their safety? How did this make you feel as a reader?
6. Hashimi has said she wanted the book to "evoke the past to illuminate the present." Where did you see echoes of current debates - in the U.S. or elsewhere - about rolling back women's rights or bodily autonomy?
7. The novel shows how quickly women can lose freedoms they once took for granted. What lessons does it offer about protecting progress?
8. What does the novel gain by depicting multiple perspectives - Marjan, Soraya, and Mina—rather than focusing on just one of them?
9. How does the mix of hope and horror contribute to the emotional experience in the novel, particularly through acts of kindness and selflessness?

Book club questions by [PrincetonBookReview.com](http://PrincetonBookReview.com)

Note: If official discussion questions are released by the author or publisher, I'll share them here.