



*The Carver and the Queen* by Emma C. Fox | Reading Guide

General Questions:

1. When you first read the title of this novel, *The Carver and the Queen*, who did you expect to be “the Carver?” Were you surprised that there was more than one stone carver in the story?
2. Which of the characters did you find most interesting? Was there a character that you changed your mind about while reading?
3. Who is the Malachite Queen? What are her powers? What effect does she have on Lena? Petr? Gorlov? Others?
4. Petr and Lena decide to “jump the fire” at the Midsummer bonfire to celebrate their secret engagement. Why is their jump unsuccessful?
5. What is different about the malachite that Petr is using to carve the second vase—the one he plans to sell to buy their freedom?
6. Why does Petr go to Zenia, the Malachite Queen, in her domain under the mountain?
7. What ways do Petr and Lena use to communicate with each other while he is with Zenia?
8. With Yermolay’s death, Lena has lost not only her biological father, but her mentor who had become like a father. What legacy does Yermolay leave for Lena? Describe how his last words help Lena throughout the rest of the story.
9. What are the lizards under the mountain? How does Petr ultimately discover their identities? Does Zenia keep her word to anyone?
10. Why does Gorlov want to get into the mountain? What is his ultimate goal?
11. Were you surprised by the confrontation under the mountain? Was there just one hero in this story? Just one villain? Explain your answer.
12. What moments in the conclusion were foreshadowed earlier in the story?

## Thematic Questions:

1. *The Carver and the Queen* contrasts brutality with beauty. Which characters embody both of these qualities? Are brutality and beauty able to coexist? Which characters oppose each other through brutality and beauty?
2. Lena recounts a story about her mother, saying, "Mama told me that stories are fire—that they could create or destroy." What stories do Petr and Lena tell themselves in *The Carver and the Queen*? In what ways do stories act as "fire" or "create or destroy" in the context of this novel? What real life examples can you give for ways that stories do these things?
3. *The Carver and the Queen* is set in a very real time and place (Imperial Russia, Siberia). What did you learn about this time and context from reading this historical fiction novel?



*The Carver and the Queen* by Emma C. Fox is a retelling of the Siberian Fairytale, *The Malachite Queen*.

If you enjoyed *The Carver and the Queen*, consider leaving a review on Amazon or Goodreads! And be sure to check out these other Owl's Nest Publishers titles for teens:

*The Fairytale Collection: Son of the Deep, Son of Bitter Glass, and Son of Gold and Sorrow* by K. B. Hoyle  
*The Queen of Ebenezer* by K. B. Hoyle  
*Thread of Dreams* by Emily Barnett