

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe Noemi Taboada, the heroine of *Mexican Gothic*? As the novel progresses, in what ways does Noemi defy expectations of her image as a privileged socialite with which the story opens?
2. Noemi's cousin Catalina has claimed that High Place "stinks of decay, brims with every single evil and cruel sentiment." Is this a melodramatic hyperbole... or an apt description of High Place? How would you describe the Doyle county manor?
3. (*Follow-up to Question 2*) How would you describe the Doyle family, both past and present? Consider Howard, Virgil, and Francis. Also, Catalina? Is she a stereotypical damsel in distress?
4. If you're a gothic fiction fan (think Daphne du Maurier, Emily Bronte, or Mary Shelley), pick out some of the gothic elements that author Moreno-Garcia incorporates into her story. At what point, however, does gothic evolve into horror?
5. What do you make of Noemi's lurid dreams of Virgil. She dreams of him at night but finds him repugnant by day. What is going on?
5. Talk about the family's mysterious symbol: a circular snake swallowing its own tail, known as an ouroboros. Akin to a coat-of-arms, what does this signify for the family—along with the motto, "One is All." Also, what are the ways the ouroboros functions metaphorically within the framework of the novel itself?
6. Discuss the role of eugenics in this family, again, both past and present? How does Noemi learn that Catalina, too, has become part of the Doyle family's secrets?
7. What is the source of the Doyle family's power? How does it intersect with colonialism and racism?
8. Were you surprised at the story's finale? The ending is ambiguous: is it satisfyingly so? Or less than satisfying? What kind of an ending would you have hoped for?

