

## Blood of the Dawn

### About the Book



The fate of three women intertwine and are ripped apart during what's known as “the time of fear” in Peruvian history when the Shining Path militant insurgency was at its peak. This powerful and poignant debut novel rewrites the armed conflict through the voice of women with a mixture of politics, desire, and pain told in lucid, brutal prose. Salazar stimulates the reader's imagination through visual and narrative references that hit us by delving into the personal stories of these three quite different women. The social trauma of Peru is full of personal tragedies like these, and while Salazar's characters may be fiction, the pain they all endure is completely real and universal.

*Blood of the Dawn* is a tremendously lyrical and ambitious debut, a highly accomplished, moving, beautiful novel that serves as an example of what art can do to help us not forget.

### Discussion Questions

1. Were you familiar with The Shining Path and “the time of fear” in Peruvian history, during the 1980s, before reading this book? If so, did you learn anything new? If not, do you feel you have a better understanding now of what it was like in Peru during this particular time?
2. Compare the lives of Modesta, Marta, and Melanie. How are their life experiences similar, and how are they different? Were you able to relate to any of the three women?
3. How does the structure and language of the story build the character of each narrator? How do the different voices interact with one another? What is the effect of alternating between the three women's voices?
4. How is sexuality explored in the context of power, violence, and desire throughout the book?
5. What are the themes examined in the novel, and how are they expressed? Did any in particular stand out to you? Why?
6. How do you feel about the way the book ended? About Modesta, Marta, and Melanie's fates? Do you feel there was a sense of closure, or were you left with unanswered questions?
7. One of the lesser-discussed struggles associated with periods of massacre and violence as described in the book are the relationships between mothers and children born of rape. Talk about the challenges facing Modesta and the other women, who, like her, have survived after losing everything and are trying to rebuild their lives, and may have had children as a result of rape. How have these experiences changed the women? What impacted you the most about their stories of survival?