Fierce Femmes and Notorious Liars

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1) The narrator is self-reflective about the kind of story she is constructing. Why does she choose to write this story? What kinds of narratives is this story responding to?

2) This novel is also a bildungsroman. Why do you think the title has the word "memoir" in it? How does the genre of the bildungsroman intersect with the genre of fantasy in this novel? Is ghost friend "real" or part of the child's imagination?

3) In our previous class discussions, we have talked about the importance of analyzing space and place in relation to identity and growth. How is space/place important in this novel? Think about larger places like cities, and domestic spaces like houses/apartments.

4) This novel often uses the second-person pronoun. Who does this "you" refers to?

5) What did you make of the lesson of the bees? What is the narrator saying about surrender, stillness, and bees living inside her? (This requires some speculation and conjecture)

1) Analyze "The Story of Soraya" through the lens of Snorton and Haritaworn's article on trans necropolitics. Why do you think the narrator "invents" a story of Soraya (68-70)? What is the purpose of this fictional construction of Soraya's story?

2) Consider the portrayal of trans death and trans resistance in the novel. How does the novel complicate normative notions of criminality? What is the novel saying about the politics/ethics of using violence as resistance?

3) One aspect of prison abolition is transformative justice. Transformative justice seeks to create accountability outside of the state's systems of punishment and control. Transformative justice is also community-based. One core principle of TJ work is to complicate and disrupt the abuser-victim or the monster-innocent binary. How does this novel disrupt the good-bad or abuser-abused binary? Why does the narrator harm others so often? Consider how the narrator harms other trans women while also being subject to violence and oppression herself. Find passages that help you make your argument.