



**Purl, Mara**

**WHERE THE HEART  
LIVES**

A Milford-Haven Novel

Bellekeep Books (384 pp.)

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The second volume of this ongoing saga follows numerous intersecting lives in a small, fictitious town on California's Central Coast.

Purl (What the Heart Knows, 2011) returns to picturesque Milford-Haven and assorted neighboring towns (Santa Barbara, Cambria, etc.) Milford-Haven stories first appeared in 1992 as a BBC radio show, Milford-Haven, U.S.A., garnering an audience of 4.5 million listeners. This most recent incarnation of the series will ultimately contain 12 volumes.

It's the 90s, and the story progresses through the day-to-day lives of an eclectic cast of characters who emigrated to Milford-Haven in search of harmony and purpose in their lives. Through Purl's two primary protagonists, Miranda Jones and Samantha Hugo, the former an artist and the latter an environmentalist, she creates a soap-opera narrative within the framework of an ecological mission. The town is filled with back stories—dark secrets, hidden agendas, failed romances and budding love, not to mention the unsolved mystery from Book 1 concerning the disappearance, and likely murder, of journalist Christine Christian.

Skillfully interspersing the moment-to-moment thoughts of her characters with their actions and dialogue, Purl effortlessly moves from one personal story to another. Just about everyone plans on showing up to a Doobie Brothers benefit concert at the Central Coast Bowl in support of veterans, which helps tie together the disparate, sometimes unconnected storylines. There's not much in terms of conclusions, since there are 10 volumes left to go in the series, but this volume should hold readers over until the next trip back to town.

Like visiting friends and catching up.