

MARA PURL

When Hummers Dream

Reading Group Topics for Discussion

1. This novelette differs from the novels in the series because it stands alone. How does it relate to the overall series? Do you prefer stories that have a traditional beginning, middle and end? Or do you prefer a serial story that continues through several books?
2. The story focuses on protagonist Miranda Jones, who lives in the world of art, and in the world of wildlife. How would you describe her relationship with the hummingbird in this novelette?
3. Do you believe animals have intelligence? Do you think the size of a physical brain determines the level of intelligence? Or can even small creatures “tap in” to a higher intelligence?
4. Have you had a special encounter with a wild creature? Share what that experience was like for you.
5. When “Mrs. Lime” arrives, she disparages Miranda’s artistic ability, yet she has no art training herself. Do you feel she has every right to criticize someone else’s work? Or do you feel she’s the personification of obnoxious behavior?
6. When Mark brings his girlfriend to Milford-Haven, he expects to share with her a lovely time in a beautiful place. Yet she doesn’t recognize the beauty and feels she’s been cheated out of a weekend getaway. What kind of romantic getaway do you prefer?
7. Though much of the story involves recognizable human behavior, the tale also includes an unusual perspective on a wildlife species. Would say this makes this a Paranormal novelette? What constitutes the paranormal for you?
8. How are the ideas of marriage and relationships expressed in this book? The older couple seem to be at odds, as does the younger. Do you believe relationships require work? Or should a true romance involve easy understanding and communication?
9. In addition to being a writer, Mara Purl is also an actress who spent a summer performing a play in the real town of Cambria, California. As both actor and writer, Mara studies people. Is the hummer of equal interest and value as the people?
10. Why is this book called *When Hummers Dream*? Do you believe the hummer truly dreamed? Does every creature dream? Or is its “dream” purely a figment of the author’s imagination?

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<http://marapurl.com/books/when-hummers-dream/>