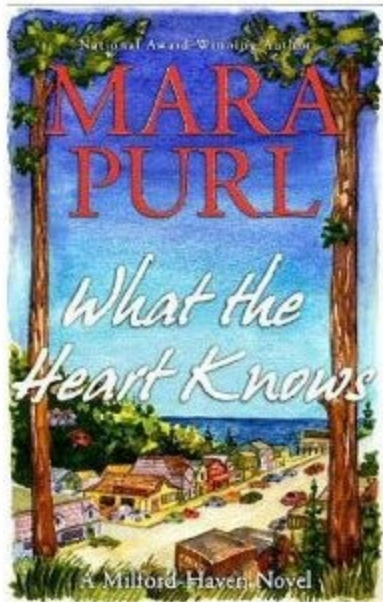


Take a Chance on Love

By Charlotte on August 25, 2011 1:58 AM | [Read More](#) | [0 Comments](#) | [0 TrackBacks](#)

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You can't escape the pull of Milford-Haven, the setting for *Days of Our Lives* actress and award-winning author Mara Purl's enticing new novel *What the Heart Knows* (Bellekeep Books; September 2011). This fictional, coastal California town offers a simpler life with amazing views, small-town kindness and infinite possibilities for romance. No wonder, it attracts so many interesting characters.

Miranda Jones, a 30-something artist, has moved to the area to be closer to the wildlife that inspires her work. She finds comfort and support from her two polar-opposite girlfriends Samantha Hugo, a brilliant environmentalist with a long-buried secret, and Sally O'Mally, a café-owning Southern girl in a complicated relationship. When trying to follow their hearts' desires, the three encounter a rebellious Native American student, a gruff builder with commitment issues and a handsome heir to an oil fortune.

To celebrate the launch of actress-turned-author Mara Purl's Milford-Haven novels, we're giving away a heart-touching gift set including:

- An autographed hardcopy of *What the Heart Knows*, the first title in the series
- A paperback print edition of *When Hummers Dream*, Mara's new e-book that's already a best-seller on Amazon. (Through Aug. 31, click [here](#) to get the e-book FREE!)
- A beautiful porcelain heart bead suitable for wearing on a necklace
- A Milford-Haven mug
- Episodes of Mara's original Milford-Haven U.S.A. radio drama

Click "Read More" for details on how to enter. Contest ends Sept. 8!

My kind of romance, this juicy, take-me-away-from-it-all read doesn't leave you red-in-the-face. Plus, the inviting story makes you think. There's room for:

- Self-analysis as the girls' learn to trust their feelings when making important life choices
- Sleuthing as a spine-chilling mystery unfolds surrounding the disappearance of a local television journalist.

In fact, you're likely to enjoy the irresistible, 267-page journey so much you won't want it to end. That's why I was happy to learn *What the Heart Knows* is just the beginning for beautiful Miranda and her compatriots. This lovable tale opens the door to a Louis L'Amour-style saga including 12 novels as well as short stories that enhance the plot. The second hardcover, *Where the Heart Lives*, releases in April 2012.

What prompts a daytime soap star and Baby Boomer like Mara to begin writing women's fiction? We asked the talented performer to give us the scoop.

Here's the Dish: A Healthy Approach

By Charlotte on August 24, 2011 6:22 AM
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Chef Anthony Stewart of the Pritikin Longevity Center and Spa proves low-fat foods can be delightfully delicious in these two recipes showcasing summer fruits: Chilled Tomato and Watermelon Soup and Merry Berry Parfait (yum!).....

Remotely Possible: Screenslam App

By Bob on August 26, 2011 4:51 AM
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I think I may have mentioned this before, but Charlotte and I loooove movies. There's nothing we like better than kicking back with a bottle of wine and watching TCM or the latest delivery from our Netflix queue. It's a.....

DVDelicious: Morning Glory

By Bob on August 18, 2011 1:48 AM
[Read More](#) | [0 Comments](#) | [ShareThis](#)

Morning Glory is a new breed of comedy. If you're thinking, "Hey Bob, romantic comedy is NOT a new breed of comedy." I'd smile politely and tell you that regardless of what you've seen or heard, Morning Glory is NOT.....

In the Mirror: Stay Don't Stray

By Charlotte on August 22, 2011 9:04 AM
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Undereye circles can be a real challenge. Lightening them has me constantly applying and reapplying creams and concealers, especially if I'm going out at night. So after hearing that Benefit's Stay Don't Stray eye makeup primer "locks on concealer," I just.....

Boomer Brief To-Go

What inspired you to write the Milford-Haven series?

The Milford-Haven story appeared first as a radio drama I created, and later began adapting into novel form. There were two instigating factors for creating my own dramatic serial. One was working as an actress on *Days of Our Lives*, because I got intrigued with the long form of storytelling. The other inspiration was an invitation from a lovely gentleman who owned a radio station. I spent a summer performing in a two-character play in the town of Cambria, California. This man and his wife came backstage to compliment me and my co-star, and he said, "If you ever want to do something for radio, let me know!"



Days of Our Lives actress and award-winning author Mara Puri

A few months later, I called and asked whether he'd be interested in broadcasting a radio soap opera, and he loved the idea. So I began writing scripts and sending them to him. Eventually, I found my cast (many from other soaps), found a studio home and began producing episodes. That's how my show *Milford-Haven* was born.

After it was a success in a few American markets, it was picked up by the BBC, where it went on to find 4.5 million listeners throughout the U.K. While the show was on the air in London, listeners began calling in asking whether there were books that told an expanded version of the Milford-Haven story. Secretly, I'd always wanted to write novels, and felt this was my destiny. So when these questions began to arise, I felt excited and ready to give it a try.

What author(s) have most influenced your writing style and why?

Murasaki Shikibu (Lady Murasaki), a noblewoman in Japan, in about the year 1001 A.D. wrote the first novel. I grew up in Japan, and studying her extraordinary novel made a huge impression on me. Her sense of place; her sense of mood expressed in meticulous detail; and the arc of her story showing choices and consequences are all elements I use in my own novel writing. Charles Dickens was another large influence, with his complex multi-character stories which he originally told in a serial format. Like him, I'm telling a serial-saga with several characters and interwoven storylines.

Which character will Boomers identify most with and why?

First on the list will be Samantha Hugo, an accomplished woman in her 50s who's head of the Environmental Planning Commission in Milford-Haven. Samantha appears throughout the story as a competent professional unafraid to wield her power when she needs to. But her vulnerability shows too. In conversations with her close friend Miranda, she reveals that she gave up a child many years earlier and now wants to find him.

Perhaps Sam's most appealing contribution to the story is her journal. One of her journal entries concludes each novel in the series, and her private writing reveals her brilliance, her self-reflection and her earnest desire for emotional and spiritual progress.

Why will Boomer babes enjoy your books?

Let me answer by describing an amazing Woman Weekend I enjoyed last fall with my closest group of women friends. We rented a huge house in Cambria, California, the real town upon which my fictitious town is based. We cooked, shared stories and did Tai Chi on the deck. We toasted the sunset as we overlooked the ocean. We sketched or painted or wrote in our journals. We walked the long, sandy Cove then hiked up into the Enchanted Forest that forms its border. We shopped for lovely artistic objects on Main Street and enjoyed a dinner out. We brought one another gifts and opened them by the fireplace. We talked about what, in our heart of hearts, we want to be doing. And we encouraged one another to do these things, because if don't do them now . . . when?

Reading my novels is like spending a weekend like that. The novels are about women creating the next chapter of their lives. The books are a "space" into which I invite my readers first, just to have fun, and then, to reflect on what they truly want.

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GET OUT THE VOTE(s)! Help The Boomer Brief become the MVB (Most Valuable Blog) in Dallas/Ft. Worth. Just visit the [CBS 11 website](#) and click on the Lifestyle Tab in the voting section. Then cast your vote for your favorite blog (hint...it's the one you're reading now). You can vote as many times as you want (a trillion times would be OK with us) but, you can only vote once each day. So, as they say in Chicago politics...vote early and often...but cast your vote for The Boomer Brief y'all. We'd really appreciate it!

I'll Drink to That! The editors and tasters of *Wine Enthusiast Magazine* scanned the U.S. in search of the absolute best in wine and fine dining in the country. Check out the list and see how many you've enjoyed (Charlotte and I have only hit four out of a possible 100, so we've got a lot of catching up to do!). You can see the complete article in the August issue (on newsstands now).

The Whiskey Folk Ramblers is a new band you're really going to like. These guys combine a slightly country sound with great vocals and a standup bass (that's where the "folk" comes from) to produce songs you'll be humming on your morning commute. My guess is that you'll see them someday as the musical guest on SNL and you'll smugly say to yourself, "These guys aren't new - I discovered them a long time ago on The Boomer Brief." To which I'll humbly reply, "You're Welcome".



[Read More](#)

What else would you like us to know about you and your work?

My novels can be enjoyed on two levels. On the surface, the Milford-Haven novels are pure enjoyment and escapism. Opening *What the Heart Knows* is like stepping onto a train and traveling to California's gorgeous Central Coast. When you arrive, you inhale the fresh ocean breeze and feel your entire body relax. You meet new people, eat in new restaurants, walk the shore and enjoy the sunset. It's a mini-vacation you can slip into.

On a deeper level, my book is really asking the reader, "What does your heart know? Those things in your heart-of-hearts that you've always wanted to do . . . are you doing them? If not now, when?"

The book invites you to carve out a space for yourself in which you can reconnect to core values, re-write core purpose and renew your commitment to live the life you've always wanted to live.

Nothing thrills me more than connecting with readers. Once I discovered I was writing women's fiction, I began to realize writing my books and connecting with my readers is like having cherished conversations with dear women friends. If I can open a space for that kind of connection for other women, I know I'm on track.

What the Heart Knows

Publisher: BelleKeep Books in association with Midpoint Trade Books

Author: Mara Purl

Other Works: 11 additional Milford-Haven Novels (one to be released every six months), Milford-Haven radio dramas and short stories, and non-fiction titles such as *Act Right: A Manual for the On-Camera Actor*, co-authored with actress Erin Gray.

Penned: Originally written in the late '90s and released in California and Colorado test markets, *What the Heart Knows* will launch nationally Sept. 27, 2011.

Time Out: 267 pages sure to speak to your heart

Beach Worthy: Oh, yes! You'll escape the heat and all your problems with women who seem as real as your best girlfriends. And there's no better way to feel one with their coastal community than having the sand between your toes.

Available: \$22.95 Hardcover from Amazon.com



[What the Heart Knows](#)
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You could win a heart-touching gift set commemorating the launch of award-winning author Mara Purl's Milford-Haven novels, FREE. The romance-inspired swag includes:

- Gift basket or tote
- An autographed hardcopy of *What the Heart Knows*, the first title in the series
- A paperback print edition of *When Hummers Dream*, Mara's new e-book that's already a best-seller on Amazon. (Through Aug. 31, click [here](#) to get the e-book FREE!)
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- A Milford-Haven mug
- Episodes of the original Milford-Haven U.S.A. radio drama

To enter the contest*, email your name, mailing address (no PO Boxes please) and phone number to **Enter@BoomerBrief.com** by **Sept. 8** and put "Heart-Touching Giveaway" in the subject line.

* This contest is only open to entrants in the 50 United States.