

Helen Keller In Love

by Rosie Sultan

Reader Questions

What did you know about Helen Keller before you read this novel? Did the character in the novel match your expectations? Explain.

Were you startled by the sexual nature of Helen's relationship with Peter? Did this challenge any assumptions you had about Helen, or about people with disabilities in general?

Helen describes her mother as living in "a shadow of grief that she couldn't save me" from the illness that took her sight and hearing and that she is haunted by the "intolerable, blurred image of what I could have been" (p.74). Imagine yourself in Helen's mother's place. Describe your feelings about Helen's life and her relationship with Peter.

Why does Annie object to Helen and Peter's romance? Do you agree with her opinion? What other reasons might she have had for not wanting Helen and Peter to be together? Have you ever had a romantic affair, friendship, or relationship that others in your life disapproved of? Did their disapproval affect your actions?

On page 43, Helen says, "Annie needed me to stay childlike." What does she mean by this? Is it true?

Helen's descriptions of sounds, feelings, and scents are striking in their beauty and imagery. Choose one of your favorite examples in the book and explain why you find it so moving.

When considering Peter's feelings for her, Helen asks, "Was he attracted to the idea of me? I had the strange sensation the answer was yes" (p.71). What does she mean by "the idea" of her?

Imagine your own life without sound or sight. What would the biggest challenges be? How would you overcome them?

Why does Helen and Peter's relationship end the way that it does? Are there any clues to this earlier in the book?

Does Peter really love Helen? Did Helen have a realistic expectation of what a

relationship is?

Would Helen's life have been better or worse if she and Peter had married?

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