

When the Rain Speaks 5 Chapters 33-40



Check in Question: Describe your favourite non human animal. Is it the kind of animal that you visit in the zoo or have as a pet in your home?

Opening Prayer

Loving Creator,
You speak to us through every living thing—

in the howl of wild creatures,
the quiet work of insects,
and the silent descent of snowflakes.
Help us communicate with care and compassion,
honoring the fragile harmony of Your world.
Teach us to accept the mystery of life and death,
trusting that in Your love, nothing is ever lost—
only transformed into new beauty and new hope.
Amen.

Reflection questions:

The questions from Sr. Melannie are thoughtful and good. Here are some of hers, along with a few additional ones. Please pick one or two and share your thoughts aloud.

Chapter 33: The buck Stopped Here

- Have you ever had an encounter like Sister Melannie's—coming face to face with a wild animal? What was your reaction?
- Have you ever stood face to face with another person and felt a sense of awe? Describe the experience.

Chapter 34: What Do You Say?

- Were you aware that the sweet smell of blossoms is the plant's way of inviting bees and other pollinators to visit?
- What are your communication strengths? What are some of your communication weaknesses?

Chapter 35: Snowflakes

- People often say that no two snowflakes are alike. One author devoted six pages to answering that question, and the conclusion was, "It depends on what you mean by *snowflake* and what you mean by *alike*." How are we, as a human family, both unique and similar?
- Do you take time to play in God's weather—as a child, a teen, or an adult?

Chapter 36: Flowers

- What is your favorite flower, and why?
- Do you enjoy giving or receiving flowers? Do you care for flowers in your home or garden?

Chapter 37: Resiliency

- Sister Melannie reminds us that we assume we are at the top of the food chain because of our intelligence and ability to make tools—but tiny viruses can change everything. Look at what COVID did. How have you experienced your resiliency lately?
- As we age, we become more vulnerable. What has been your experience of vulnerability?

Chapter 38: The Spider in My Room

- It's likely that a spider is within a few feet of you, though the distance depends on your surroundings. Spiders are more abundant in natural or cluttered environments and less likely to be near you in open or sterile spaces. What is your attitude toward insects?
- How do you usually respond to ordinary encounters with insects in your home? Are you Franciscan in spirit—gently capturing them and returning them outdoors—or do you simply stomp on them?

Chapter 39: Migration

- Have you or your ancestors ever migrated? What were the circumstances?
- What migrating creatures have you witnessed? What was your reaction?

Chapter 40: Meditation in a Cemetery

- What is your attitude toward death? Have you ever spent time in a cemetery for reflection?
- How do you stay connected and communicate with loved ones who have gone before you into eternal life?

Closing Prayer

For whom and what shall we pray..

God of all creation,
As we leave this time together,
fill us with Your peace that calms storms
and opens hearts.
Send us out as caretakers of Your earth—
to protect the wild ones,
to honor the smallest creatures,
and to cherish the beauty You place before us each day.
May our words and actions sow healing,
so that all creation may flourish in Your love.
Amen.

What shall we look at next?