



West with the Night by Beryl Markham

1. Nowhere in the book is there much evidence of strong emotion on her part, even through there are some hair-raising episodes. What in her upbringing and background do you think led to this detached attitude?

2. All through her story, Markham shows great empathy for animals. She even enters into the mind of the Royal Exile, Camciscan, telling of her conquest of him from his point of view. Do you find this an effective way to tell the story? To which animal does she show most affection or respect?

3. Although she occasionally refers here and there in the narratives to her sadness at leaving Njoro, do we feel it in her descriptions of that leave-taking?

4. In the chapter entitled, "Hodi," we find her realistic view of the racial inequities of her time. Do you think if she had lived on into our era of "political correctness," she would have been so apparently accepting of these divisions? Can you find anything in the book to substantiate your answer?

5. What early incident foreshadows her later dedication to flying? Do you think it could be said to be passionate attachment? Why?

6. Nowhere does she mention her mother or brother. What do we find out about her relationship with her father?

7. At some point after its original publication, Markham's detractors claimed that her 3rd husband, a Hollywood screenwriter (Raoul Schumacher) actually wrote or strongly assisted her writing this book. (See the note above the copyright in the text). Her biographer, Mary Lovell, refutes this charge and Beryl herself

"contemptuously dismissed" the rumor that she didn't write the book herself (info from *Straight on till Morning*, by Mary Lovell, 1987, St. Martin's Press). This biography was started before Beryl Markham died in 1986, and contains quotes from personal interviews with Markham.

8. Are there any references or allusions in the book itself that could be used as evidence of enough "book education" to refute the accusations that she did not write the story alone?

source www.storycircle.org