

Science Fiction

Discussion Questions for *Exit Velocity*, by Barbara Gregorich

1. Science fiction set on Earth is rarer than science fiction set in outer space or on another planet. Why do you think that is? Why do you think the author set *Exit Velocity* on Earth? What things would have been different if she had set the novel on another planet?
2. *Exit Velocity* can be classified as political fiction, social justice fiction, and science fiction. In what ways does it belong in each of these genres? Which genre do you think it best fits into? Why?
3. At which point in the novel did you know or suspect that Deeply was from another planet?
4. What are the elements of science fiction that you love most? Why? Do any of them appear in *Exit Velocity*?
5. Why do you think Jake chooses *The Day the Earth Stood Still* to show to Deeply? Do you think that *Exit Velocity* has similarities to *The Day the Earth Stood Still*? What are they? What are the differences between the film and *Exit Velocity*?
6. A lot of “first contact” science fiction emphasizes the ways in which humans change during and after the contact. Do you think that Rowan and Jake changed much after contact with Deeply? If so, how and why, or how not and why not?
7. Is Deeply vulnerable? If so, how? What does it mean to be vulnerable? Would you expect a being from another planet to be vulnerable?
8. The parrots on Deeply’s planet are far more advanced technologically and socially than are humans on Earth. Discuss some of the ways this is so.
9. How do the social struggles in *Exit Velocity* compare to the social struggles in the classic science fiction novel *Earth Abides*, by George Stewart.
10. What do you think the title means?
11. How does Deeply as a visitor to Earth compare to the visitors in Clifford Simak’s *Way Station*?
12. What is the reason that FeeOna sends Deeply to planet Earth? Why does he have a Duty to the Universe rather than a Duty to his home planet?
13. At one point in the book Deeply ruminates about humans and other life, and thinks: *Humans have a horrible belief that all other living things are for the personal use of humans. Even non-living things, such as water and air and minerals.* Do you think his assessment is right?