

BURNING WOMAN

*A must-read for all women!  
A life-changing book that fills the reader with  
a burning passion and desire for change.*

**Glennie Kindred, author, *Earth Wisdom***

The long-awaited new title from Amazon bestselling author, Lucy H. Pearce. *Burning Woman* is an incendiary exploration of power and the feminine. Pearce uncovers the archetype of the Burning Woman, fearlessly examining the roots of feminine power—what it is, how it has been controlled, and why it needs to be unleashed on the world during our modern Burning Times.

These burning words were written for women who burn with passion, have been burned with shame, and who at another time, in another place, would have been burned at the stake.

With contributions from leading Burning Women of our era: Isabel Abbott, ALisa Starkweather, Shiloh Sophia McCloud, Molly Remer, Julie Daley, Bethany Webster.

*In an era when Western feminism seems too  
about loudly celebrating woman as a thing, this  
refreshing book. Lucy's vibrant words are a  
reminder, and a joy to read.*

**Janina Restall Orr, author, *Kiss of the Muse***

LUCY H. PEARCE

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## INVITATION

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*The Dalai Lama said,*

*“The world will be saved by the Western woman,”  
and I agree, she might just be a burning world’s last chance. But  
before she saves the world, she has to save herself. So how?*

*How do we heal ourselves to heal the world?*

**Sarah Durham Wilson, DoItGirl.com**

For years I have joked with my women’s circle that we would dance around a bonfire. Naked.

It is a running joke that come the next full moon or summer solstice we’ll all strip off and dance naked. We tease our husbands that we will enact this ultimate cliché which a gathering of women arouses: the naked circle of witches, wild women or radical feminist empowerment groups. But most of us, myself included, are quite reserved and not ones for dancing naked in public. But it doesn’t stop us talking about it, eyes sparkling with a daring we’re not sure we really possess in the flesh.

The more I think about it, the more I see it as our subconscious desires expressing themselves.

Dancing naked around a bonfire is a powerful metaphor: a longing to be naked, authentic, vulnerable in our own skins. A longing to be ourselves: feminine and free, dancing together. . . and at the same time alone. The rhythm pulsing through us. The beat moving us. The fire our elemental centre-point, lighting our steps, burning away our anxieties and burdens.

Rooting us in ourselves, in sisterhood, in the Earth.

Our conventional selves snigger at the idea of wagging our boobs in the moonlight, thighs wobbling in the chill night air. What would people think? What would they say if they knew? Would the neighbours see us? Would the other women stare at me and judge me for my imperfect body? How could I ever look my friend in the eye again once I had seen her muff? Our cheeks burn with shame at the thought. Every box is ticked: something outside of our cultural comfort zone, body issues, women together — must be lesbians, witches, crazy, mad — all the labels that over the years have been successfully used to keep women down, shut us up, get us back in line.

The fire which burns outside is still greater, for most of us, than the one that burns within. And so we keep our clothes on, laugh away the discomfort, and say, with sadness and determination: "Next year! We'll do it next year." But we never do.

This book is for you, dearest woman if you long to be more powerful and courageous, and know that now is the time to step into your own skin and be seen.

Will you come and dance around the bonfire with me? Do you dare to face down the stereotypes and the shame? Do you have the courage to dance to your own tune and be witnessed? Do you dare to burn bright with your own inner flame visible to all?

Let yourself be embraced by the powerful sisterhood within these pages. Warm your soul on their burning words. Dare to venture into the sweet dark and bitter cold and be cradled beneath the bare trees, as you gather with friends to watch the flames lick and dance, the sparks fly. Feel the sense of danger and delight, the warmth on your hands and face and belly as the fire grows brighter.

Let us find a way for the fire within to overcome the fire without.

We are living in burning times and they call for Burning Women. This is our time to come out of the shadows and burn brightly. Let's throw off our clothes and dance round the fire together.

This book is a wake-up call to the Burning Woman within you. A remembering through words, visions, poems and practices, an invitation to reinhabit your powerful body. It contains the prayers and petitions of a hundred voices, to awaken the Burning Woman within each of us, to call up our courage to step into her. It is a hymn to the powerful woman. A love letter to the crazy woman, the mad one, the witch, the hag. An invitation to the creative woman: the dancer, the poet, the artist. A call to arms for the activist, the strident woman, the playful trickster. It is an embrace of the passionate woman and the wild mother. It is written for every woman who follows her own spirit, who dares to put herself first. She who shouts in the face of authority and follows her heart not their God. She who dares to give voice to what is inside her, who shakes things up and burns them down. She who quakes with rage and rolls with laughter, who moans with pleasure and wants more. She for whom every piece of life needs to have the marrow of its bones sucked, who dances naked, and eats with her fingers. She who stamps and says no. She who stands in the doorway and will not let them in. She who opens her legs and dives into her juices with delight. She who dares. She who does what they say cannot be done, must not be done. She who tries and fails. She who does it her way. She who longs to walk topless in the sunshine and dance naked in the moonlight.

It is for her, and all of us, who long to be more like her wherever on the path we may be. We who have sniffed the smoke as she walked past our door one hot summer afternoon and thought, *I long to burn, but I mustn't. I'm too afraid, too old, too young, too busy. I don't know how. I'd lose my job, my husband*

*would divorce me, my mother would disown me, my friends would laugh. . .*

*This is for you, dearest one,*

*You are more powerful than you dare believe.*

*This is for you, Burning Woman. . .*

*ARISE!*

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## BURNING WOMAN

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*We dare not talk of the darkness, for fear it will infect us.*

*We dare not talk of the fire, for fear it will destroy us.*

*And so we live in the half-light,*

*Like our mothers before us.*

*Come to the fire,*

*Feel it warm your skin.*

*Come to the fire,*

*Feel it burn in your belly,*

*Shine out through your eyes.*

*Come dance in the fire,*

*Let it fuel your prayers.*

This book is for all women who burn with passion. Have been burned by shame. And in other places, at other times would have been burned alive for what they do and who they are.

It is written for every woman who has struggled with expressing herself. Every woman filled with burning questions, who longed to give voice to the ideas within her, but was too scared by what might happen if she did. It is dedicated to every woman who is in the process of stepping into her power. And every single woman who has been burned when she did.

In my work with hundreds of women over the past few years a theme has emerged: women's desperate, unquenchable

desire to step into their power, countered by the fear of what will happen if they do. The longing to express the riches inside them, wrestling with the deep terror of being burned by the judgement, hatred or rejection of strangers or loved ones if they do.

This fear of being burned is an oddly female one. It is a fear which keeps us small and scared. . . but seemingly safe. From the outside this can seem like an overreaction. Both the need, and the fear. But women, it seems, have an innate knowing of what it means to burn. . . and be burned. They know the dangers in their bones. And it makes them wary.

In the words of one woman:

“I have worked on a fear of being me for so long—an abject terror that being me would equal death.”

I identify completely.

Because I too have learned that who I am, what I do, is dangerous.

Just a couple of months before the idea for this book came to me in full force I had what I can only call a waking dream. I was standing in the kitchen, when suddenly I realised I could burn for my work.

The agony of this almost strangled me from within. I realised I could stand to lose everything—my reputation, my community, my beloved husband, my precious children—simply for doing the work that I burn to do.

About a year before I had had an email, out of the blue, from a woman who warned me that I could be on the radar of the powers-that-be. She had been hunted out of Ireland, she said, tried at a secret court, found guilty of witchcraft. And she was not as visible as I was. My head swam. What were the consequences of doing my women’s work in a world that felt threatened by it? I tried to put her warnings aside as the paranoid ramblings of a crazy lady.

But this fear—whether a feeling in our bones, or a

substantiated threat from outside—keeps most of us caged and small.

I know. Because the women I work with tell me this. They tell me how trapped by terror they are; that their desire to create or speak out is submerged by fear. What is at the root of this, I wondered? And so, as I travelled from my own personal fear, to this more universal female experience of burning for our work or our creativity or sexuality, the seeds of this book were sown.

For almost a decade I have written words for women—in books and blogs and articles for magazines and newspapers. I have woven ceremonies and led groups, I have taught classes and talked and listened to women around the world. I know that there is a hunger, a yearning, right now. Many, many women can feel something stirring within, and they sense something stirring without. Something far bigger than just their desire to paint or write or start a blog or a business or a protest. There is a collective burning igniting within women. A deep need to tell our stories and be heard. A longing to heal past hurts and move beyond them, into something big and bold and fresh and new. Something is changing, we can sense it. And yet when we have this yearning, when we hear this calling, there is still the paralysing fear: *will I be burned alive?*

Over the past two months I have noticed something else amongst my Facebook communities: a rise in anger and frustration, the feeling that enough is enough. Enough of bitchy competitiveness amongst women, enough internet trolling, and misogynistic social media memes, enough rape threats, enough brutal acts of terrorism, enough bully boy tactics on the international political stage, enough austerity, enough exhausting ourselves trying to be everything to everyone.

*We have had enough.*

We are emerging from a sense of helpless, numb denial that nothing can be done, into a burning belief that something must be done. . . and the knowledge that each of us has to act in

whatever way we can to help it come about. I have witnessed as women have stepped into their power — organising fundraisers and collections of supplies for refugees, starting or sharing petitions, leaving jobs and abusive relationships, starting businesses and new lives.

We are learning that we are the ones we have been waiting for: it is both thrilling and terrifying. We hear the call, but hold back, unsure as to what it might entail. We have received the invitation to step more fully into ourselves, but do not know if we dare to respond. We fear what comes next. We believe that in order to step into greater worldly power, we must be more powerful. But we don't know how.

And we have seen the lives of powerful women in the public eye enough to know that each step we take towards our truth, requires trial by fire — inner and outer — as we find the courage to face down the judgements and restrictions of others and embody ourselves more authentically. We can sense this, and it scares us. We don't know how to proceed, because the mainstream world does not acknowledge the winds of change that are making our noses twitch. And so we can feel alone, burned out, frustrated, and even a little crazy as we try to work with these massive energies that are shifting within us, and in the world outside.

### INCENDIARY WORDS

*Men often react to women's words — speaking and writing — as if they were acts of violence; sometimes men react to women's words with violence. So we lower our voices. Women whisper. Women apologize. Women shut up. Women trivialize what we know. Women shrink. Women pull back. Most women have experienced enough dominance from men — control, violence, insult, contempt — that no threat seems empty.*

**Andrea Dworkin, *Intercourse***

I must warn you that the ideas within these covers will be incendiary to many. This is a book of her(e)say which will contradict so much of the existing paradigm. It is strongly and proudly at variance with the established beliefs of his-story that we have been taught to unquestioningly accept and obey. Let me be very clear, that my intention is not to attack or shame any individual or their heartfelt personal belief. I honour our diversity of being and belief. To me, personal belief, where it does no harm to others, is sacred. What I do not hold sacred are the structures of power and dogma that have been unassailable for most of his-story, that have caused untold damage to individuals and cultures. It is at those that I am taking aim with my burning questions.

His-story has brought us here. But it cannot save us. His-story is burning us *all* alive. The temperatures are rising, ice caps are melting, sea levels are rising. These are the burning times. A time of systemic collapse. But within it is the spark of new life: the potential for paradigm shift is rich, ripe and ready. Now the phoenix of humanity can rise out of the flames of the old culture. Now is the time for the return of the Feminine into her full power, to work in partnership with a new, mature Masculine. Now is the time to give birth to a new world. The midwives are being summoned. Burning Women hear the call.

But not everyone wants a new world. Not by a long shot. Many are deeply invested in the old world model, or they feel trapped and powerless. Many even think that the revolutions have happened, and we are already inhabiting happily ever-after.

Just today I read a male supporter of home-grown Middle Eastern feminists (who had stormed a stage and bared their naked breasts in protest) chastise American women: "YOU are not oppressed. THESE women are oppressed." I have been chided like this too. Told, in no uncertain terms, that as a middle-class, cis-gendered, "hetero" white woman in a

European country in 2015 I have no idea about oppression, and any oppression I perceive is attention-seeking victimhood and lame excuses. *There is no burning, I am told, so shut your mouth, get back in your box and be grateful.*

Well, before I drop my head in deference, let's just recall the statistic that one in five American women is sexually assaulted at college,<sup>i</sup> that there are just 27 female world leaders in 197 countries.<sup>ii</sup> Or that the majority of world religions are ministered and led almost exclusively by men. When I was a child women priests did not exist, in any mainstream Christian church. In the Catholic church they still do not.

Enough of religion and politics already? How about business, then, where feminism has supposedly done its thing? But here the statistics are little better: just 14% of top executives in the US are female,<sup>iii</sup> in Japan this figure is just 3%. The leader in world gender equality, Norway, has just a third of women in top jobs.<sup>iv</sup> Across the board the pay gap has narrowed to a mere 19.1% in the UK, for men and women doing the same level of work. After 40 years of pay equality being enshrined in law.<sup>v</sup> It doesn't get any better in the arts, with only two women making Forbes' list of the top twenty earning actors in 2015, and whilst less than 3% of the artists in the Modern Art section of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art are women, 83% of the nudes are female.<sup>vi</sup>

Yes, we're allowed to drive and attend sports events, unlike in Saudi Arabia, yes we can stand in law to defend ourselves, unlike in sharia law, yes we can receive an equal education without being shot or kidnapped, as in Pakistan and Nigeria. But equal in power and opportunity? Ha!

If you still believe that women and men currently enjoy full equality in our world, or that women's subjugation is divinely ordained, then either buckle up and prepare to be challenged. . . or go enjoy happily ever after, and pass this book on to the woman in your life with the wild look in her eyes. The one that

burns with a passion she doesn't quite know how to access. The one whom darkness covers from time to time. The one who went out one night in the dark and lost her courage. The one who churns and struggles and rattles cages. The one who has lost her mother, lost herself. The one who is losing her faith. The one who dreams of revolution. The one who has been burned deep by shame. The one who longs for more.

## FIRE AND THE FEMININE

*Many non-Western traditions state that feminine energy is about receiving. However most of us in the West have been taught that feminine energy is about giving.*

**Dr Eve Agee, *The Uterine Health Companion***

For too long women have been told they are like the moon, reflecting the glory of the sun. We are told that the feminine is receptive, watery, submissive, full of beauty not power.

In her book, *Shakti Woman*, Vicki Noble relates an epiphany about this: "The Feminine to [my husband] was related to the planet Neptune and the elusive watery element and seemed from my perspective to be weak, insubstantial, and conveniently not really there. The Jungian view of the 'anima' [inner feminine] as vacuous and seductive, alluring yet forever unattainable, was offensive to my feminist consciousness. 'If that is the Feminine,' I screamed at him, 'then what am I?!' The Feminine, in my version, was fiery and substantial, taking up real space with her real expression of self and demanding to be encountered rather than imagined."

I am with her. Whilst I have parts of me that are reflective and watery, I have lots of fire in my soul too. I, and multitudes of other women, were not made to be passive and submissive as our culture has taught us for most of history. We burn. Our



experience of the Feminine is not confined to water and air: we are consumed with fire.

Fire is not a purely Masculine realm. Nor is water a Feminine domain. We each have access to both elements. We each have the Masculine and Feminine within us. But our culture has set one against the other. And kept the fire from our hands.

It is time for us reclaim Feminine fire. Expressed by women. In women's ways.

*Have we not done that already?* you ask. Feminism has happened. We are not 1950s housewives, trapped by the feminine mystique. We are not shrinking violets, bound by Victorian-era morals and corsets. We are modern women.

Yes, we are, but still we are party to moral codes so different to men, which aim to keep us obedient and submissive in subtle ways. It seems that however many times women rise, those women of fire who led the suffragettes and the waves of feminist movements, women as a whole are put back in their place. What happens to women of fire still in our culture? We get held to different standards, and we get burned.

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I have watched in interest as women the world over have used metaphors of burning when they speak of power and passion: burning embers of passion, having their fingers burned, being incandescent with rage, smoke and mirrors. It seems to be a common vernacular, a shorthand amongst women, that needs no translation. It is barely a metaphor for those who burn, whether with passion or shame: the burning is literal.

As one of the four elements, fire is a primal building block of the world and evokes deep feelings, emotional and physical. Transformative by its very nature, it is both creative and destructive. Powerful, yet insubstantial, fire is both there and not. The flames flickering this way and that. Where are its edges? What is its form? It is always in flux.

I am a firm believer in the power of words to move energy

into matter and thought into action. Words help us to share our experiences and visions for a new reality. As Julia Penelope says, "the process of finding different ways to talk is a necessary prerequisite to reshaping what and how we think."

This book is full of burning words. Metaphors.

Metaphors invoke vivid emotional responses within us by taking simple language and weaving through powerful but familiar images and associations. These living images appear to have a direct access not only to our brains, but emotions, physical bodies and energy too, in a way that more technical, logical language does not. They provide keys to our unconscious, allowing access to previously inaccessible memories, ideas and power.

Our world is constructed from metaphors, woven from stories. We're told that "life's a bitch", and we're engaged in a "war of the sexes", we "play with fire" and "get burned", we have "fire in our bellies" or are "cold-hearted". We have become so used to these phrases that we treat them as incontrovertible truths. We fail to see the metaphors as just that. When we unpick the old patriarchal metaphors of war and domination at the seams, we realise that we have the power to create new metaphors in their place, to remake the world in our own image.

I believe that metaphor and archetype are keys to the transformation of consciousness. Each of my books is based on this understanding — the weaving of words with images and creative exercises to actualise real change within ourselves and our world.

What first appears to be a book, is in fact an initiation. As you read, I invite you to stay aware of your body and emotions, note the impact that the words and the ideas have on you internally. Feel where they inflame you, with passion or anger. See where they hit blockages or seed sparks. Because they will.

These are burning words.

Written for you, Burning Woman.



## THE F WORD

*How can we, women, who have been taught to be afraid of every little noise in the night, dare to imagine that we might destroy the world that men defend with their armies and their lives? How can we, women, who have no vivid memory of ourselves as heroes, imagine that we might succeed in building a revolutionary community? Where can we find the revolutionary courage to overcome our slave fear?*

*Sadly, we are as invisible to ourselves as we are to men. We learn to see with their eyes — and they are near blind. Our first task, as feminists, is to learn to see with our own eyes.*

**Andrea Dworkin**

*Burning Woman* is a book of feminine power.

For years I would have run the other way, making puking noises, rather than pick up a book about the feminine. If that's you, I hear you.

Let's start our exploration right there: in the feminine — that which supposedly defines us as women, but which so many of us feel ambivalent about at best, but often hostile, detached or alienated from. The feminine stands for all that we have been taught to reject as deeply flawed or inconsequential: our mothers, ourselves, other women, nature... We have unconsciously imbibed the incessant patriarchal propaganda about the weak inferiority of the feminine, its inherent imperfection, its silliness and triviality.

We live in a culture that is only just, in very recent history, opening up to the possibility of women as equals. Ours is a culture that has been built, ruled and inherited from father to son — in heaven as on Earth. This is the patriarchy, literally meaning, "the rule of the father", a social system "in which males hold primary power, predominate in roles of political

leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property; in the domain of the family, fathers or father-figures hold authority over women and children." vii

Ours is a culture in which the masculine is the norm. Both genders in our culture have learned to suppress signs of the feminine in order to survive and be accepted, which has led to a hyper-masculinised culture of men... and women. And we have been taught to "perform" the feminine in order to gain approval, sexual attraction and power. As women in Western culture we have been taught to value more masculine traits and denigrate, disregard or trivialise more typically feminine ways of being.

"The feminine" is usually shorthand for: beautiful, gentle, slim, restrained, non-confrontational, carefully cultivated, domesticated, emotional, girlish and weak. It is often a term of disparagement... because the feminine has been blacklisted. Most qualities deemed not masculine, or in any way pertaining to women, have been slighted, shamed or silenced. To do something like a girl is a pejorative statement.

Whilst women's options have undeniably increased in the modern world, *feminine* is still quite a small prison cell for the female soul. In our current economy, *feminine* is used to sell infantile tat at inflated prices to hungry, powerless women who long to be perfect enough to be acceptable and loved.

As a good damaged girl of the patriarchy, I have tried (and failed), at various points in my life to be feminine when I longed to fit in. I painted my walls peach and my nails pink and my face an odd beige. I curled my eyelashes in the desperate attempt to be acceptably feminine in the eyes of the world. I have tottered on heels and laughed politely at men's unfunny jokes, worn push-up bras and painful thongs, bitten my tongue and said no to dessert (well, maybe once) to be more feminine.

But really, I don't care. And I have a sense that what it means to be a woman is a whole lot bigger than having a pink Kitchen

Aid, a passion for shoes and pneumatic breasts. And I think you do to. But try talking about what the feminine really is, or what a woman is and you're going to get a whole lot of people hot under the collar. And not in a sexy way. I know, because it's my job, and people like to fling shit my way when I open my mouth to say things they don't like.

So it's no surprise that if people get worked up about what you mean by woman or feminine, they go bat-shit crazy when you mention the g word. Goddess. I have avoided it like the plague in my previous writing, because I know it is so deeply misunderstood. Both by many who claim to follow her and most who are riled by the notion of Her. The Feminine face of God isn't some vajazzled diva, nor the devil in disguise, but an awesome power source, the nature behind nature, the raw life force, the power behind our power.

But it's generally safer not to talk about Her.

You see, what I have discovered, writing books about women, for women, is that we have a lot of no-go areas. Not only subjects that we cannot, should not, must not talk about for fear of upsetting everyone, but also a lack of common language. We lack acceptable words for speaking about our bodies, our sexual experiences, spiritual experiences, maternal experiences. And so when someone dares to, and gets it wrong, what do we do? Oh yes, we burn her!

So please know that I'm not throwing these terms around lightly. And nor do I have any attachment to what you choose to call these things we'll be exploring. Or even if our beliefs diverge. But as we're working with words, then you need to know what I mean. I have to choose words to contain these ideas. But if certain words rankle with you, mentally replace them with those you feel more comfortable with whilst retaining the spirit and intention behind them. The right word holds the key to not only your basic comprehension, but also your deeper, somatic understanding.

So let's differentiate now by using a capital F. What I mean by *Feminine* here is the power of the life force shooting through a birthing mother; the gentleness of a woman breastfeeding her newborn; the passion, strength and vulnerability of a woman in orgasm; the connection of blood and steel of a woman with her sister; the fierceness of a woman defending her family.

The Feminine is your wild instinctive self, your core longing, your deepest life force. It is that which feels most true to you as a woman: uncultivated and raw. The Feminine is that which makes you alive and makes you burn. The Feminine is your passion: your expression of love, sexuality, creativity, relationship, beauty, devotion... through your female body and mind. The Feminine is the felt sense of acting in the world, based primarily in the body, rather than through the mind.

As an aside I'm aware that there are many who do not identify with their gender or the bodies they were born into. Body dysphoria is common in this modern world, commoner than we'd admit. Whatever gender we were assigned at birth, we all have both masculine and feminine energies and drives within us. And we're all born into a patriarchal culture which sees and shapes us differently into stunted, restricted versions of the full people we could be. So we're all doing the dance with learning to express them both authentically within our human bodies, but for some the struggle is harder.

Defining the Feminine is immediately problematic — it sets up a dichotomy with the Masculine. And in this world, we have a habit of making dichotomies into good and bad. Not so fast, if you're wanting some man-hating you've come to the wrong place. The masculinity we see running rampant in the patriarchal system is not the developed Masculine, but the defensive masculine, the immature, ego-based masculine trying to defend a man-made hierarchical order against chaos, nature and the Feminine.

The reality we are currently inhabiting is the shadowlands

where immature masculine and feminine are awaiting transformation into a creative partnership of their fully mature selves.

So here we are. We've learned how to live life on masculine terms, through our minds, with our feelings shut down. Men and women both. And the Feminine. . . well, her ass has been beaten and locked up, her tongue cut out, she has been stoned, shamed, tied to a stake and burned. Again and again. Over the course of a couple of thousand years. Around the world. And because we rather like staying alive, women and men have both learned to subdue their expression of the Feminine.

The Feminine has been demoted, defanged, disempowered. Her innate power—her sexuality and beauty, nurturing instinct and creativity — replaced with the safe imitations of it, done as performance, and always with reference to what is pleasing to the male gaze. We have been sold back the feminine with a small f, in lipstick tubes and powder puffs and fake boobs. At a high price.

But we say "enough!" We refuse to buy what they are selling any more. We are claiming our birthright, stepping into a mature Feminine power that we get to define for ourselves.

*Where the feminine is pink,*

*The Feminine is*

*Blood red.*

*Fire red.*

*Burning hot.*

*A power to be reckoned with.*

## WOMEN AND POWER ... THE STORY SO FAR

*The majority of the population in virtually all nation states is female and is forced by patriarchy to obey, be silent, and acquiesce which means that 'democracy' does not yet exist anywhere. What happens then when that majority refuses to obey?*

**Robin Morgan, *The Demon Lover***

*Power.*

Even the word burns with promise. . . and danger.

Power in our world is usually synonymous with money, status, material possessions, authority, politics. It is associated with big guns, big muscles, grand titles, silly hats, tall towers . . . oh, and men.

Power in all its forms has been historically considered the domain of the masculine. And for most of history the only way a woman could gain power or money was by offering her body in some sort of exchange for it: through marriage, servitude, childbirth, sexual favours. . . Power was given, and it could be taken away, without warning. A woman's own innate power was denied, scorned or prohibited: by God, and law, and man, her role was to demure, submit to and obey the powers that be. Or be punished

Let us look a little closer at the structure of patriarchal power which has dominated our culture for thousands of years. We are so familiar with it, that it's often hard to see it for what it is.

Look around you. All the major civilizations are represented by stone phalluses: temples with ornate columns, church steeples, vertiginous glass sky scrapers and pyramids. From the desert pyramids of Egypt and the jungle pyramids of the Mayans, through the pyramid with the all-seeing eye on the back of every dollar bill: they have been the dominant symbol of masculine order and control.

The power we have experienced so far in our lives on Earth

is man-made power. The power of the pyramid with God the Father at the top, his kings and priests below him and then women in their "rightful place" further down. This patriarchal model of power has been refined and violently imposed as "divine right" over a couple of millennia, through states, churches, homes, asylums, torture chambers, bed chambers and jail cells, until the majority have learned to submit. It has been enforced through laws and threats and free trade treaties and rape and genocide.

*Patriarchy is a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence. . .*

#### **bell hooks**

But the pyramidal paradigm of power is already crumbling. The fallacy of phallogocratic rule is being exposed. The old stories can no longer support it, they are being ripped away and overwritten. The patriarchy is akin to the Wizard of Oz —hidden behind his curtain, projecting power through smoke and mirrors —the time has come to pull the curtain aside and reveal his true impotence.

#### **THREADS OF POWER**

*It is not power that corrupts, but fear. Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it.*

**Aung San Suu Kyi**

This word *power*, it is slippery and complex, with layers of meaning. What do I mean by power?

I mean political and cultural power — the ability to make decisions, to express ourselves and contribute meaningfully to our culture.

I mean economic power — the right and ability to own and use money, status and possessions as a mature adult.

I mean spiritual power — the right and ability to commune with our interpretation of the sacred in our own way.

I mean creative power — the ability to vision and create our own visions of reality.

I mean biological power — health and wellbeing, the life force energy.

I mean power as in physical strength — the sovereignty over one's own physical body.

I mean personal power — the right of an individual to fully inhabit their life and express their being (in ways that do no harm) without fear.

When we are starting out these might seem like a load of disparate strands. But that is because we are seeing through the goggles that our paradigm has put on us, where matter and spirit, self and other, masculine and feminine, sex, spirit, art, money, body, power and nature are separate.

But they are all connected. And over the course of the book we will begin to untangle these threads and find ways to reweave them into a new paradigm of power — one that can be shared by both genders, and that does not degrade either those who share in its power, nor the rest of life on Earth.

Power is the outward manifestation of energy.

On a global scale it is recognised that we are entering an energy crisis. The search is on for new sources of energy to replace the dirty, unsustainable and increasingly scarce fuel supplies we have been running on. We are having to move from fossil fuels to renewable sources for our cars and homes. The same is true internally. The energy sources we are running our bodies and culture on are depleting us too. They are dirty and

unsustainable. They are killing us and our world. The structures of power are strangling, not supporting, innovation, creativity and community.

Let us call in and create the revolutionary possibility of new sources of energy, and new power structures that the patriarchy denies are feasible or desirable. As Burning Women, we can learn to do this at the most basic level: by consciously working with energy and reweaving the very structure of reality.

Does this sound crazy? Far-fetched? Deluded?

When we talk about energy, it can seem quite abstract and esoteric, but it follows the same patterns and laws as the forms of power we are more familiar with. Electricity is a form of energy—seen in static charge and thunder storms—which we have learned to produce, channel and domesticate only very recently in human history. To our ancestors, electricity would have been akin to magic, and yet in just over a hundred years we have gone from discovering it to basing an entire culture on it.

I believe that in the next hundred years other forms of energy found in nature and our bodies will go through the same process of scientific discovery and harnessing as electricity did in the last century. In a hundred years' time, what I am talking about will not be considered esoteric in any way. But at the moment we only have New Age and non-Western understandings of energy in the body—*chi* from ancient Chinese medicine, *prana* and *kundalini*—the fire of life—from yogic thought, as well as other systems of thought from native cultures around the world.

In terms of our own biological energy, our use of it has been basic, because our understanding and technologies have been basic. We have been in survival mode, just focusing on staying alive, for most of human history. But, as Maslow pointed out, once we have met these needs, our energy can rise to creativity and self-actualisation: we can move beyond surviving into

thriving and conscious co-creation. This is where large tracts of the Western population are poised now. We have the possibility, the potential and the obligation to reconfigure how we work, energetically. . . and then we are empowered to rewire and refuel our culture from the inside out. When we do this, we have the power of nature, the secret of the universe, on our side.

We have not been taught how our energy really works, or how to use it. Of course we have not. Those who run the current System do not want empowered individuals who are unwilling to submit to their authority. Because then their game is up. Instead they seek to keep us in a sense of childlike dependence to the patriarchs—both our individual parents, and the state system.

Whilst many people do not mind exchanging their mature power and energy for a parent-figure to care for them, more and more people are saying *no*. The costs are too high.

Burning Woman is she who chooses to step beyond energetic immaturity with her parents and the state, and into her own power, as a creative, healthy, self-sustaining, powerful individual.

This is nothing short of revolutionary.

Patriarchy is neither natural nor inevitable as they tell us. It is man-made. It is acquired mainly unconsciously. And therefore it can be un-acquired and deconstructed—consciously. Not by attack or debate, but through a wholesale divestment of our interests. Once we see how invested we are in it energetically, we realise that we can make conscious choices to take our power out of it: rather like removing our savings from a bank, or changing electricity suppliers. We just need to know how. And when we do it in large enough numbers. . . things will change. Not just in our individual lives, but on a much larger scale. We just need to stop investing in the current system. To stop believing his-stories to be the Truth. To stop being a gullible audience to the illusion of monotheistic patriarchy, and look

behind the scenes, at the strings which let them break the laws of nature.

*The system will collapse if we refuse to buy what they are selling — their ideas, their version of history, their wars, their weapons, their notion of inevitability. Remember this: we be many and they be few. They need us more than we need them. Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.*

**Arundhati Roy**

### WHO IS BURNING WOMAN?

*This woman burns*

*Blood red*

*And orange.*

*The flames lick her toes, her thighs and up between her legs,*

*Her womb is consumed, her breasts are on fire,*

*Her hair alight.*

*She is gone and in her place ashes and soul.*

*Burn, woman, burn!*

*With your own fire and passion.*

*Burn from the inside,*

*Out into the world.*

Burning Woman is a powerful image. A role model. A metaphor. A warning. She is Feminine power incarnate.

Eve was the first Burning Woman in his-story, punished for her passion with painful childbirth for the rest of his-story. Pandora. Inanna. Cleopatra. The whore of Babylon. The Queen of Sheba. All these are the Burning Women from the

ancient pages of patriarchy. Women who loved too much, who were led by their inner voices and sensual bodies to express their passions in their own ways. Each was a woman who dared to wield Feminine power in a patriarchal world. Each was destroyed, and her story passed down as a stark warning to women everywhere of what happens to a woman inflamed by passion. *Beware women*, we were taught, as we listened to their stories, *this is what happens to she who burns too bright. You will fall, and bring curses, punishment and damnation not only upon yourself, but upon all who love and follow you too.*

Our culture has been both wary and obsessed with the woman who burns for millennia. She has always stood as the antithesis to that which the patriarchy holds dear. She is a free-thinker. A questioner of authority. She is multifarious in a world that requires monotheism. She is too passionate, lustful, hungry, too uncontrollable. She is the artist who will enchant you with beauty, the activist who will start a revolution, the harlot who will override your logic, the temptress who will arouse your libido, enflame your emotions, the witch who will cast a spell on you.

*Beware!*

*Beware the woman who burns!*

Free-thinking, powerful, passionate women are dangerous to a conservative male-dominated culture. They tend to do what they want and believe is right. . . not what you tell them. And so patriarchal cultures have a deep-seated fear of women in their power, their ability to give life. . . and take life, their uncontrollable emotions, their intuition, their constant changing. Rather than seek partnership with this power, the patriarchal system has chosen to dominate and subdue the women who show signs of it through shaming, branding, naming, ostracising, traumatising, raping, medicating. . . and burning. In patriarchy powerful women are a threat.

Their cautionary tales are intended to cultivate the Good

Girl aspect of ourselves, to shut us down. But when they are heard by the dormant Burning Woman within, they whisper of possibility, their sparks leap out of the pages of history and inflame the hearts of living women. Burning Woman's power is beyond time and place. It is contagious. A woman on fire is a wonderful thing if you are dreaming of a bright new future. A life-sustaining future. Burning Woman is a guiding light, a beacon of hope, a trail-blazer for those of us who dream beyond the strangulation of patriarchy.

Burning Woman does not play by the rules of men. She burns the books of law and reinstates the rule of nature. She refuses to be boxed in. Burning Woman pisses on the patriarchal pyramid, she laughs at the silly hats and fancy names. She calls the women by name, men too. Tells them to come to her in the dark of night and she'll show them what REAL power looks like. Power that makes kings' dicks shrivel up.

*Watch out, she calls, you want to see power? THIS IS POWER!* And unleashes a volcano, a typhoon, an earthquake, a revolution of women. She laughs in uncontrollable glee as they cling to their pyramid in terror, clenching their gold between their butt cheeks.

Burning Woman is she who is inflamed by her own direct connection to the Feminine life force. She who dares to follow her own vision, who speaks up and tells her own stories. She naturally sails counter to what she has been taught. Because what she is taught is how to be a good not-quite-man in a man-made world under a Father God's rules. The process of unlearning is long, as she learns to uncover her own authentic source to life's power, and claims her own authority to navigate her life according to her inner flame, not the outer lights she has been shown.

She has often been depicted in the forms of the dark goddesses: Kali, Medea, Medusa, Oshun and Hecate. When she is given her way, she gives birth to the world. When she is

wronged or men try to control her, she destroys with impunity. She is not to be messed with, the embodiment of Feminine power, who dwarfs the masculine and eats the most powerful men as afternoon snacks, adorning her body with their bones.

Our modern cultures fear her destructiveness, and have no place for her and no image of her. Powerful women are not desired by the patriarchy. And so they have painted her out of his-story, taken down her statues, forbidden her worship, silenced her sisters through death and shame. And without her awesome model, without her instruction, women have no archetype to inform them. We have forgotten her knowing.

But we are remembering.

Burning Woman teaches us other ways of power — the fire circle, the spiralling helix of life, the web of interbeing, the multicellular organism — autonomy within interconnected community. She shows us these forms throughout nature. Hers is the power of the pouncing lioness, the roar of a hurricane, the swoop of an eagle, the crashing of a wave, the gentle force of the moon on the tides, the unleashing of a mighty orgasm, the contractions of labour, the spider weaving a web of gossamer silk.

To ally ourselves with her, we must, once again align ourselves with the cycles of the sun, the moon, the planetary movements, the seasons and each other. We can only reclaim our native power, when we realise that we are an integral part of all these things, and they are of us. This power is deeper and stronger than worldly power. It is incoercible, because it is not taken on faith, it is not believed or blindly followed, it is not reliant on the opinions of others: it is known, within every cell of our beings. This power is the life force itself.



## LOST ARCHETYPES OF THE FEMININE

Burning Woman is an archetypal figure and one that most women seem to resonate instinctively with: both the inner burning of passion and powerful desires, but also the identification with the terror of being burned, whether shamed in this lifetime. . . or remembering the Burning Times. Despite this universality, I have not come across her discussed anywhere else in terms of archetypes. She is, I believe, a lost archetype of the Feminine, and one who holds the potential key to shifting our relationship to power—inner and outer—in this world.

But what exactly is an archetype, and how do they work?

Archetypes are universal energy patterns which exist in the collective unconscious, emerging with regularity in dreams, art, metaphors and stories. We inhabit many of them over the course of our days, some on occasion, and some as our dominant modes of self-expression. Some of the more commonly-known Feminine archetypes are Queen, Princess, Mother, Virgin, Whore, Heroine other common non-gendered ones include: Teacher, Victim, Martyr, Fool. Over the course of this book we will be meeting: Burning Woman and Burning Man, The Good Girl, The Witch, Starving Woman, The Patriarch, The Shadow Man and The Devouring Mother.

Archetypes have existed in human culture since the dawn of time, but they were brought into modern therapeutic healing work by the founder of analytical psychology, C.G. Jung in the early twentieth century. He believed that the activation or awakening of an archetype releases enormous power within a person. This has certainly been my experience.

We can engage with archetypes in many different ways—through writing, painting, movement, active imagination, story, image work. . . Whether we access them through images or words, or both at once, they provide keys to hidden inner portals of the psyche. The right word, image or phrase can

unblock a previous dead end, so that energy can flow once again and our power can be reclaimed.

Archetypes hold fascination for me and I have been researching them informally for nearly twenty years. A large part of my work—in my writing, art and teaching—has been in reclaiming and revisioning lost archetypes of the Feminine.

This was in no small part because I never personally identified with so many of the traditional feminine archetypes—I never aspired to be a Princess (always her father's daughter, never her own woman), never felt as though I were the Good Mother. Even the ancient goddesses and heroines that so many women's books share feel distant and alien to me.

And so in my books I share other archetypes, ones that resonate strongly with women like myself, who inhabit the edges of our culture, the spaces of revolution and foment. They are archetypes for women with powerful energies who do not fit easily into the more passive roles prescribed for us by our masculine culture.

Throughout the book, we will be becoming more familiar with Burning Woman as an archetype and her qualities that we can use as blueprints for our lives. At others, I will be directly addressing you, dear reader, as Burning Woman—to acknowledge these qualities already within you, and help you to embody the archetype further. And occasionally I refer to the Feminine face of God, the divine Feminine, the Goddess, the sacred presence—as the immanent expression of Burning Woman. I trust you will find your way. And the more you immerse yourself in this archetype, the more you will see that these differences are in fact irrelevant. This energy, this consciousness, this power are all the same.

## WHAT OF THE BURNING MAN?

*Women's liberation has often been portrayed as a movement intent on encroaching upon or taking power and privilege away from men, as though in some zero-sum game, only one gender at a time could be free and powerful. But we are free together. Or slaves together.*

**Rebecca Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me***

Many people who read a book of flames which talks of Burning Women, of the patriarchy, often respond: "But what about men? Not all men uphold the values of the patriarchy. What about our gentle sons? Our beloved husbands and caring brothers, our loyal cousins, our treasured creative colleagues and friends? What about them? They suffer too, they struggle too." Yes, they do. They burn too.

Throughout history there have been millions of Burning Men. Men who were burned at the stake. Who burned for the love of a god . . . or a human lover. . . who was not proscribed. Who dreamed of community along different lines. Who healed according to their own authority. Who took up the fight for women, for peoples of colour, for the oppressed, the down-trodden, for wild nature, for crazy dreams and new ideas — who went against the powers-that-be and fought for what they knew to be right. There are millions of men today who heal and vision new paradigms, who paint and write, who protest for rights, advocate for the dispossessed and hold up our culture for the sham it is. Men who stand powerfully beside the women in their lives — who defend the rights and joy of their sisters, wives, mothers and daughters. Men who do not fear the Feminine, but honour it deeply and who are dedicated to embodying the mature Masculine. Men who father from the heart with tenderness. Who make passionate love and lives with their women. Men who live powerfully in partnership.

I have been lucky to have a life full of Burning Men — my

husband, my father, my son, my many male friends, teachers, healers and artists, writers and thinkers who have inspired me. I honour their place in my life deeply. I stand shoulder to shoulder with them. And they with me. We have each other's hearts and backs. We are partners in art, vision, passion, struggle and love as we move into deeper relationship with each other.

There is much we share. We have so much in common.

And we are different too.

This is not about polarisation, or women against men. Nor am I implying obligatory heteronormativity or heterosexuality. We all have both masculine and feminine energetic forces within us and express and relate to them with people of both genders.

Where either gender is in fear of, or feels superior to, the other, there can never be a partnership of equals. This is what we are literally dying for now on Earth: a living partnership of mature Masculine with mature Feminine power. Power with, not power over. A community and culture which respects and encourages autonomy of individual expression — with the proviso that we do not hurt others — without recourse to shame, manipulation, punishment or death.

Burning Woman and Burning Man combine the mature Masculine and Feminine in creative partnership. To get there we have to reclaim the Feminine — women and men both — to travel deep into Feminine power, so that the two can mingle as equals.

## THE HERO'S JOURNEY

*Aligning our ordinary life with our evolutionary divinity is a path of fire. You burn. You grow. You burn. You grow. Constantly. The only stability is our trust in the process.*

**Sera Beak, *Red, Hot and Holy***

The quest most of us learn early on is that which is played out in movies and his-story books: the hero's journey. The boy goes out into the world, naïve and innocent, overcomes his weakness and fears, faces trials, slays the dragon to prove himself. In this way he becomes a hero, grabs himself a fair maiden as a reward and so proves himself a man. In this archetypal story lie the seeds of masculine power: public acts of courage, domination and bravado make you top dog and get you a fuck.

Like many of us, I started out on the hero's journey. My dreams from the age of eight would have made Freud proud. Mine was a classic case of penis envy. Night after night I dreamt that my penis had been cut off. This thing of which I was so proud, my source of power, had been sliced at the root. Everyone crowded round to see this penis in a box. It was mine, but it was no longer mine. I felt its loss deeply.

In the waking world I was a high achieving academic from early on, scooping most awards going, top of most classes I was in, passionate about learning and achieving. I lived with my head in a book. I loved Barbies and flower fairies, writing, drawing and dressing up. . . and I also liked Lego, Meccano, rock-climbing in my bare feet and playing football. Blue was my favourite colour. But the older I got, the more I discovered that there were two sets of rules. One for the boys. And another for us girls. And theirs always seemed fairer than ours.

When games of football got too boisterous at break time, the girls were banned. The decree came down from on high: only the older boys could play on the top playground. Everyone else had to share the lower playground. For one of the first times in my life, aged nine and a half, I felt the boiling outrage of a female wronged. I led a delegation of girls up to the headmaster's study to demand our rights. We got them. But this benevolent headmaster's powers only went so far. At eleven I went to the after-school cricket club and played well, but when it came to matches I was categorically not allowed to play. The other

schools would not allow a girl in their boys-only club.

Talking of boys-only clubs, I went to church a lot. (I know, you probably weren't expecting that one, were you?) I had a passion for learning more about God. I used to lie in bed at night trying to figure Him out. I loved the music and sang in many choirs. I got top grades in my Religious Studies GCSE and elected to study the Bible as Literature as a module in my first year of University. I went to church twice each Sunday when I was at Cambridge, studying to be a teacher. But as the years went on, I found myself getting angrier and angrier as I sat in church listening to the male priests talking about God our Father. *He. He. He.* . . until I wanted to scream.

*Why was the omnipotent divine force male,* I wondered, *when we're told that God is beyond gender?* And whilst we're on the subject, all creatures were created equal, but Eve got made as an afterthought from a surplus rib? *Please.*

I began to take on the Jehovah's Witnesses who called religiously to our door every Wednesday morning. Each week, I grabbed my Bible and read them tasty titbits of rapes and murders encouraged by this supposedly all-loving God. From this book, the word of God, that was written by men. All men. In which men begat men. And women brought the curse upon our species. I realised in my mid-twenties that I was done with the church as it stood, one that was intolerant of women and gays and didn't practice what JC himself, whom I have down as the archetypal Burning Man, preached.

And as I pulled my power back from those stories, as well as the stories of selling your soul to big corporate cultures for hefty salaries, I began to realise that the hero's journey was not created for me. It was not my story. It held no true reflection of my life, my feelings, my body and its needs. I was trying to prove myself through it, rather than simply be myself.

Throughout secondary and tertiary education, I had driven myself hard externally—I found great satisfaction in achieving.

But in private I was a woman committed to discovering herself on the inside. I had no idea how to share this part of myself, so I hid it away.

I sought out PhD programs abroad which I hoped would lead me towards writing the books I always knew I would write. Lacking a penis for prestige, I felt I needed the authority conferred by the title, Dr, to be able to speak and be heard. I yearned for the masculine stamp of approval, to have the permission to express myself on the public stage and the printed page. But I also knew that by the time I graduated, I would be wanting to have children. My life as I knew it would be over. I was scared of the debt. I was angry that my boyfriend didn't have to worry about these choices and worried that this following of my fire too strongly would burn my relationship up.

So I diverged to playing it safe, stepping away from my doctoral aspirations, instead training to be a secondary school teacher closer to home. I did what so many women do—I chose *acceptable*. I chose *responsible*. I chose *safe*. I played the Good Girl, and folded my book writing dreams up and put them in a dark drawer of my psyche, and instead taught teenagers how to write essays, whilst occasionally taking the authorities to task with revolutionary verve.

But life had other plans. I became pregnant two months into my teacher training course, and started the initiation to motherhood much sooner than expected. With three kids in four and a half years, the urge, the absolute need to reclaim space for myself, to become the 'me' I was outside of motherhood grew stronger and stronger. My embers were burning. I tried to ignore them, but they started scorching my skin. I tried to throw them away. To submerge them in water. To cover them over. It only led to deeper burning. And so I did the only thing I had not done. I leaned towards them and blew, put in my energy and kindled them until they began to grow. I moved

from teaching to living. Over the course of eight years a creative writing class I taught in my sitting room turned into my starting to write articles, which turned into a magazine editing job, a column, a blog, then books and a publishing company. It sounds easy, when it is put like that. It was not. Not when my passions are so niche and contradictory. But what I have learned each time, is that the answer lies in uncovering the embers that fuel me, my deepest passion, my strongest fear, my deepest desire—which it is so easy to cover up with busyness and other people's judgements and fear and excuses and the ever-present threat of shame.

I have grown my life's work congruently with my own inner flame. But the shadows it casts, in myself, in others can scare me. I am by nurture conflict averse, needy of other's acceptance and approval—a very strange countenance for someone so at odds with the culture in which she lives. As my work has grown I have found myself separated from my old self. I have two personas which don't seem to meld. The shy, Good Girl me who finds it hard to talk about my work and finds it hard to make conversation at the school gates and who will die if anyone I know reads this book. The one who gets burned by the smallest slight, feeling the acid of words only half meant dig deep into her soul and who dissolves into months of crippling anxiety and depression. And the other me. The me who burns. Burns with revolutionary passion. With a desire to build community, to write and paint, to challenge. These two felt senses of self have been in direct opposition and so I have been trying to find a way to reconcile my Good Girl self, trained as a second-best hero, with my inner Burning Woman on a revolutionary heroine's journey

Having written the paragraphs above, last night I had a dream. I was in a play (drama was my first career path—I gave it up after months of nightmares about opening my mouth on stage and no voice coming out). I was cast as the husband.

We were rehearsing, in front of an audience. My main role was to do the emotions, whilst my wife talked. Then we appeared again at the end of the play. Only this time I was the wife. I worried whether I would I remember all my lines. And then I realised that it would be very confusing to the audience—that I was first the man and then the woman.

I realise on reflection that this has been the way of my life, and that of many women I have spoken to. We start out on the hero's journey—leaving home to find our fortunes, slaying dragons to get glory. The hero's journey is the one our world is based on; girls get the chance to live it too nowadays. As long as they can play the part, and be stronger and cleverer than the men, and can survive the toll it takes on their bodies and spirits.

But then at some point, we realise that we are not men. Living the masculine way, when we are birthing our babies, mothering our children, living in menstrual bodies is profoundly unhealthy for us. Soon we realise that however hard we try to be good men, we are not judged in the same way, paid in the same way, we have to work harder and longer to prove ourselves worthy, and even then we are still not enough. Or maybe our health buckles under the strain of work, marriage or motherhood, the expectation that we care for sick relatives. Suddenly we find ourselves in the dark, sick, depressed, burned out. . .

This is our awakening to the Feminine, if we will take it. It shows us that the hero's journey is not our journey. Ours is the heroine's journey, a spiral journey of inner and outer discovery of our innermost selves and our source of Feminine power. We travel inwards, into dark and unknown terrains, finding our way through to the other side by discovering an inner flame to light our way. As we travel further on we realise that this inner flame is the goal we have been seeking, the guide and ourselves are one and the same, and furthermore the light and the darkness are two parts of the same whole.

We have long inhabited an era of Separation. Separation

of the material from the spiritual, the Masculine from the Feminine, light from dark. And now is the time, when that which has been oppressed is rising to full equality, balancing the imbalance. Now is the time of the maturing of both masculine and feminine, the hero and the heroine, realigning the two powers in their mature expression and partnership.

But before we move forward, first we must spiral back, to see where we have come from and learn from our past experiences and collective conditioning, to examine our fear of Burning Woman as we have been shown her in his-story. We need to understand how the world we inhabit works, understand its power over us, before we can release its spell, and focus on the inner work of rekindling the Burning Woman within.