

Quill of the Goddess

Spring 2026

Rebirth

Volume 2 Issue 2



About Quill of the Goddess

Founded in 2025, *Quill of the Goddess* is published online biannually, featuring work by visual artists and writers worldwide. We focus on poetry, essays, and art that will enrich and inspire readers with vivid imagery, soulful reflection, and spiritual depth. Key themes include women's empowerment, connection to Earth's rhythms, devotional practices, and personal transformation.

Our mission is to publish and promote the best of today's voices in the modern Goddess Movement.

Submissions

Quill of the Goddess accepts poetry, essays, and art. Our reading periods are June 1st through September 1st and December 1st through March 1st. Send your work through our online submission manager at quillofthegoddess.com.

Inquiries

For questions regarding submissions, please see the submission guidelines on our website at quillofthegoddess.com/submissions. For general inquiries, please contact jen@quillofthegoddess.com.

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A Journal of Art and Literature Dedicated to Goddess Spirituality



Volume 2 Issue 2

Spring 2026

Rebirth

Cover Art: *Galaxy Birth*
by Carla Sanders

Jennifer Miller, *Founding Editor-in-Chief*

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FEATURES



Cover Artist
CARLA SANDERS

Carla Sanders is an artist, ceremonialist, and guide to women on their spiritual path to cronehood. Her art and teaching remind women of their intimate relationship with nature, and the wisdom of their erotic self at any age. She lives on a beaver pond surrounded by wild relatives on the coast of Maine.

Galaxy Birth is mixed media acrylic on canvas. The galaxy in the image is composed of mica from stones that broke open in ceremonial fires. Carla says, “The galaxy represents our relationship to the cosmos, which is the origin of our intimacy with our self and with nature on Earth.”



Featured Poet
RACHEL TURNEY

Rachel Turney, Ed.D. (she/her) is an educator and artist located in Denver. Her poems, research articles, reviews, and drawings can be found in a variety of publications. Rachel is passionate about immigrant rights, teacher support, and empowering other artists. She is a *Writers’ Hour* prize winner and Best of the Net nominee. Her photography appears on a few magazine covers. Rachel runs the popular online reading series *Poetry (in Brief)*. She is on staff at *Bare Back Magazine* with her monthly column *Friday Night in the Suburbs*. She reads for *The Los Angeles Review*. Website: turneytalks.com Instagram: @turneytalks Bluesky: rachelturney



Featured Artist
STEPHENIE KAHN

Stephenie Bushra Khan is from Winchendon, Massachusetts. She is a graduate of The Worcester Art Museum, a freelance writer, an artist, and a poet. Her artwork has been published four times in *Tijeret* journal. She is a Worcester Area County Poetry Contest winner, and she participates in poetry readings in both Temecula and Lafayette California. Her poetry appears in *Sisters* magazine, *Azizah* magazine, and *The Independent*, a weekly newspaper of Dhaka Bangladesh, 2003-2005.



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

When I chose the theme of “Rebirth” for this issue, it was an act of defiance. As I write this letter, war continues in the Middle East, deadly tornadoes have hit the Midwestern part of the United States, and all of the Epstein files still haven’t been released. At the same time, the tortoiseshell butterfly, thought to be extinct since the 1980s in the UK, has made a comeback. Bolivia created four new protected areas covering 2.2 million acres. After 200 years, a herd of bison was released onto native Illinois prairie to the sounds of cheers and drumbeats from the Santee Sioux. Despite the continual reminders of destruction in this world, creation and reparation is always happening too. The key is to deliberately look for it.

The older I get, the more I see that life is about learning to accept paradox and continual change, or even welcoming the two of them, because they are inherent to the design. Franciscan priest and spiritual author, Richard Rohr, often speaks about the process of moving from order to disorder to reorder. Rebirth is the reorder stage. It’s what happens after the chaos when the lessons have been integrated, and applied knowledge becomes wisdom. In the Tarot, after the anguish and disruption of The Tower, we feel the calm, quiet peace of The Star, pouring compassion back into the world.

That is what you’ll find here—stories of coming back from catastrophic losses, of being torn down and rebuilt, of leaving home to explore new lands and returning forever changed, of winning the battle of addiction, and of letting Mother Earth teach us how to let go of all we thought we knew and be reborn.

With love and gratitude,

Jen Miller



Jennifer Miller holds a BA in English Literature and MA in Professional Writing from Kennesaw State University. A Pushcart Prize nominee, her work appears in *Humana Obscura*, *Gypsophila*, *SageWoman*, and several feminist anthologies. Born and raised in the North Georgia mountains, Jen is proud to be “souled” in Appalachia. She loves hiking in the forest, crocheting, playing her dulcimer, and stargazing. Find her at jenmillerpoetry.com and [@jenmillerpoetry](https://www.instagram.com/jenmillerpoetry) on Instagram.

Underneath, All is in Order

Katja Boehm

Submerging myself in the cool waters
of the river of life,
I am fully conscious.
I am fully dressed.
My spirit animals surround me
in the air, on land and right here
next to me in the stream.
Getting pulled along,
I am slowly losing
one piece of clothing
then another
as the river claims my naked body.
And I feel embarrassed, yet free.
“I am all woman,” I scream.
This is when my skin gets zipped off
and underneath, I am
a human being with genderless features.
“I am a mother,” I scream,
as I see a child underneath
my next layer of zipped-off skin.
“I am white,” I say,
but the stream rips from me
my white skin
and I am of olive-bronze colour
underneath.
Layers of waterlily pads
cling to me.
As they drop off as well,
I’m shown my core by my most resilient
spirit animal.
I am a gold nugget.
Suddenly, I’m surrounded by more
star dust and miniature galaxies.
It all spins and breathes around my core.

Different plants and light sources
circle me
(the nugget 'me').
I am my own center.
What an amazing realization.
Two turtle doves land on me to show me
the importance of balance
and equilibrium.
All is in order.

A Treat for My Soul

Faiza Kiran

Tonight, I will hold
a pamper party...
a pamper party for my soul:
I will oil my dead antennae with
the mud of my mortal cast, I will
soak my downtrodden tools
in the hot tub of thought, I will
treat my closest allies dark and bright and will put them
in the conditioning room of my conscience
and will be a plaintiff, a defender and the judge.
I will wipe the thick mist off my binoculars
with the puffs of reality till the mist will fill
the pool, and I will swim in it feeling the coolness
of the brackish water dripping down from
the clogged pores of my skin...I will drink it...
drink it all, I think, till it invigorates my blood.
Yes tonight, tonight, I will close my eyes
and will rest in the soothing music of my sighs
till my neurons emitting light will change
into balloons, red, black, blue and white,
and tonight, I will pop them all...one by one,
like a little child...with fright and delight
and then I will laugh...I will laugh the laughter
of a tarnished heart, I will cry the tears
of a confessing soul, I will dance the moves
of a raptured sage, yes, tonight I will smile...
I will smile the smile of a victorious warrior...
bathing in the starlight of conquest and immersing myself
in the dust of my mortal cast.
Yes, tonight, I will hold...a pamper party...
a pamper party for my soul.

Change is Beauty

Faiza Kiran

When dark, bare branches dull and brown
again dress in green and wear a crown

When dull fields wake from winter sleep,
and colour spills where shadows creep,
the earth shakes off its tired disguise,
and spreads a thousand sunlit skies.

When silent woods and rotten ground
become alive with blooms leaps and bounds,
the wild wakes up, it jumps, it plays,
it claims its life in brilliant ways.

When pale horizons break their hush,
and clouds are brushed with rainbow blush,
When the sky remembers how to shine,
to paint the world with a light Divine

When quiet gardens, still and small,
are stitched with birdsong over all,
Each home hums soft, each heart beats loud,
and life blooms fresh, unbroken, proud—

Then let spring remind us, here, right now,
we are fragile, flawed, and somehow
we stumble, break, betray, forget,
we count our scars, we mourn regret.

But like the earth, we can begin,
to shed the old, let light rush in,
to mend, to rise, to turn the page,
to be the best on life's new stage.

The Unknowing

Astrea Sophia Gold

I have been peeling layers of my self
There are so many variables I only sense
and the path has disappeared from sight
The heart is listening quiet

Maybe there are still ways I can hold contradiction
I do not live in neat boxes of certainty
The only hint I keep getting is
even Buddha touched the ground
and the earth witnessed his awakening

The valley, the river, and the mountains of this place hold and shelter me
From where I stand, and sleep, and dream
the earth whispers
I will keep faithful to her

If you have come here for knowledge
If you are looking for transcendent angels
I have nothing to offer you
for I am learning to listen and acknowledge
the great unknowing of what I thought I knew

I look at green details all around

They only give me joy with their cycles of harsh grace
I don't know if I am going anywhere but here and now
But soul is everywhere and there's no need to chase her



Karen Elias *The Fullness of Our Wingspan*

Illness is a Midwife

Merry Stanford

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) was the midwife that helped me give birth to myself. In childhood, when living in a body was frightening and painful, Spirit rescued me. She helped me feel safe, be free from pain, and enjoy the pleasures of the unseen world. By the time I got sick at age 40, I had developed a strong adult spiritual practice. Spirit was my source for guidance, protection, comfort and strength. I thought life was finally tonking along really well! And then...the Earth yawed open beneath my feet and demanded my transformation. Here are some of the lessons that I am still mastering, thirty years later.

1. Life is very sweet.

That life is good and sweet may seem like an obvious thing, but because of the intensity and chronic nature of my childhood challenges, I hadn't ever really noticed that *the struggles were over and I was alive*. I kept reliving the feelings, body sensations, and images in my thoughts, dreams, and general orientation toward the world. Therapy helped with the PTSD, and I am very grateful to my former therapists. But it was the contrast provided by RA's chronic pain that allowed me to finally appreciate that I was alive, and life was very sweet indeed. On the days when there was no pain, I was filled with gratitude and delight to be able to walk, work, pull weeds, hike, enjoy friends, sleep through the night. Simple pleasures became rapturous delights. I learned that these mundane things, to which I'd been blinded by the memories of struggle, were wonderful blessings.

2. I hated my body, and it was life or death for me to learn to love it.

I never knew that I hated my body while I was hating it. I just thought that it was slightly disgusting – too fat, too weak, too uncoordinated, too something-or-other. I felt ashamed of it, but thought, vaguely, that this was normal. My unaware belief was that somehow bodies were untrustworthy and in need of firm handling. It needed stringent diets, stringent exercise, stringent sleep regimens. (I once tried to exist on five hours of sleep per night because I had read somewhere that this was all the human body needed). I avoided looking at myself in the mirror. Any health habit that I tried to initiate was introduced with a firm resolve to “shape up” – and so, of course, every resolution failed, and I experienced once again how “untrustworthy” my body was.

Then I got sick, eventually receiving the RA diagnosis. In RA, the body attacks itself –

the immune system attacks the synovium, or the smooth lining, of the joints, as well as ligaments, tendons, and other soft tissue. It's serious, and can result in shortened life span and increased risk of heart attack, stroke, lymphoma and blindness. My body-hatred had finally manifested as a physical disease. RA was pleading with me to wake up! When I realized how closely linked my attitude toward my body was to my body's own attitude toward itself – I knew it was life or death for me to learn to love my body.

3. It is vital to ask for and accept help.

When I was young, there was no help. Either the trustworthy people could not see, or the offers of “help” were tricks designed to manipulate or exploit. I grew to suspect offers of help and to keep to myself. The blessings of kindness from a nurse and a few of my teachers helped me imagine what it *might* be like should someone see my pain, notice my need, and help. Male doctors made it worse, either treating my body like a piece of meat, like my tormentors did, or verbally attacking me as a young adult when I was unsure about my willingness to have babies. When I did become a mother, I was desperate enough to ask for help from a public health nurse for my baby. That happy outcome encouraged me to continue asking, learning this lesson very slowly, one situation at a time.

By the time I received my diagnosis, I had no choice but to accept help – from my husband, my employer, my children, my doctor, my friends. I am grateful that I didn't have to learn this lesson completely from scratch while also dealing with a new diagnosis. RA taught me that it is vital to choose my helpers carefully, but that it is worth it to take the risk. As I receive the living water of others' love and kindness, I have more in the well to share with others.

4. The world wants my gifts, not my sacrifice.

When I was growing up, I was the oldest of six children. My brother, the second oldest, was able to escape our chaotic household by taking off on his bike. He would go exploring miles away from home – in the parks, streams, ponds, and wooded back lots near our developing, working-class subdivision. I yearned also to go but never felt I could. There were four younger children at home needing protection. So I stayed. I was *supposed* to sacrifice – that's what it meant to be a girl and a woman.

Unfortunately, this view was encouraged by prevailing religious and cultural attitudes into adulthood. I don't regret caring for my younger siblings, or teaching special education children, or mothering my own children, or doing healing work. But I no longer believe that I must sacrifice myself to help. I may choose to give something away for the benefit

of others: comfort, income, or leisure time. But never again will I forsake my soul, my evolution, and my being. I will never again be a sacrifice because I *must*.

This was the most surprising gift of grace from my healing journey. When you believe you were born to be a sacrifice, it is a shock to learn that others outside of your closed system don't have the same expectation. My friends did not really expect me to use myself up on their behalf, as I protested social injustice, lived on an untaxable income, or said out loud the hard things everyone else was thinking. It made them uncomfortable – even though they shared my values and admired me. I didn't understand. I thought they were just more interested in comfort than in joining me in a life of witness and integrity. I believe now that my friends detected, correctly, that because there was little joy in my witness, there was no life in it. It didn't attract them.

Being sick helped me realize that expecting myself to be a sacrifice, like my body-hatred, created an environment for disease. To be well in my body, I had to give up sacrificing it.

My current friends want me to fulfill my destiny, live my dharma. They call out my gifts of healing, prophecy, writing, and leadership. They thank and assist me! My soul thrives, having my gifts recognized and affirmed by my communities. No sacrifice necessary!

5. Power is neither bad nor good, and I can use mine.

While I was still healing I joined a special shamanic adventure in the Canyon de Chelly, land which is sacred to the Navajo people. We spent a week journeying, doing ceremony, and learning in the company of a Navajo woman, who owned the land, and a Q'ero shaman who was an interesting combination of masculine and feminine traits. One evening he taught about power. I felt myself recoiling at the word, having the mistaken belief that power was bad.

But he spoke about the union of “upper world” Spirit power with the power of the Earth, a living being he named “Pachamama.” To the power of Spirit he joined the power of the elements, the weather, the stones, the animals, the waters, the sky, the lights within the sky, and human beings. He said we all have access to this power, we can learn to use it effectively, and it can be used or misused, much like any other power such as electricity or fire. He said that a shaman seeks to *augment* their power for personal fulfillment and evolution, and for the benefit of the community.

What a revelation for one who had been *giving* away her power by the basketful all her life!

That is how I have spent my life since – reconnecting with the living stream of power that

is available to all of us. It is a stream of power that flows from Spirit, through me and into the Earth, and back again from Earth, through me, to Spirit. I believe there is no more room in this body for any illness that deprives me of that power. My body and spirit are capable, together, of the greatest transformation: the reclaiming of my own essential wholeness. And this wholeness is an integral part of the transformation of a wounded world into a healed one.

Blessed be!



Stephenie Kahn *Miriam*

Moon and Sun

Jon Raimon

bare, born into shadows. your
smog our gruesome birth

right. under our prim
coat, our pretty sun

bonnet, we seethe with reason
with sex and rage, our vulvas

caged. we will not
dive, die, hand

over our breasts like
processed valentine

dreck for you to gobble
within. we are our

brawn, our bodies: our
wisdom the Sun, the

Moon all ours. circled
ceremony, we rise and

dance tonight. you
best not sleep, not

even wink. just slink
back below, we'll

(not) forgive your weak
loins, your blank

manila minds. listen and re-
pair the devastation in

our fashion: Sun up, Moon on.
full of our bare, sweet power

Waters

Jon Raimon

For Kaia'tahente, on her birthday. We miss you and feel you with us.

Day after the torrents
Old friends fall

Roots to the skyworld
Sitting stones vanished

We bow, we tremble
Just over yonder

Rebirth everywhere
A tripling of the water-

Ways: sidestreams emerge
Yesterday's trickles now

Rivers: I know erosion
Comes naturally

Stormclouds rumble in our
Veins, fossils buried

New lives
New directions

Cut through. I see the
Beauty and I mourn

Then there you are, on
The water, gratitude

Your paddle, your
Heart our lifejacket

We mourn, yes, and
We feel your beauty

Like the river
Wash over us

Your boat
Your strength

Your spry spirit
Buoying us all

Interview with Rachel Turney

Tell us about your forthcoming poetry collection, *To Be (a Woman)*. What inspired you?

I started really writing and actually saving drafts two years ago. I am not sure why I wasn't doing more of this before, but here I am in my 40s with my first book(s) coming out. I noticed some themes right away with my writing; one that emerged was the experience of being a woman. Being a woman is my strongest identity and allegiance. There is a global war against us, one only need look at the statistics. Seeing Trump elected by own family (extended, not immediate) also made this evident right here in the place I call home. It sucks to be so disregarded, disrespected, and marginalized. I took all of these feelings and wrote *To Be (a Woman)*, which is my story of womanhood. I examine identity, the one we all create and the one we were told to create. I look at relationships with friends, family, and romantic partners. I talk about working in higher education, writing, and traveling. It's a book that I hope will make other womxn feel seen and that I hope starts discussions around identity, healing, and self-acceptance.

I reached out to Kristy Anne Richards at *redrosethorns* because I wanted to work with her on this collection. I felt we shared the same background, mission, and desires to make change related to feminism and equity. It turns out I was right and, one year after our first conversation about the possibility of the project, we will be launching the book together as *redrosethorns'* inaugural full-length book.

How does your spirituality or ethical outlook inform your writing?

I listen to nature and the words of others and look for deep meaning everywhere. Spending time pausing with intention is a big part of how I live and write.

I enjoy examining and learning. I am interested in legality and the exacting of language. With this project, I am highlighting my assertion that we have an international responsibility to other humans and for me, that looks like supporting women on a global scale, especially artists, refugees, and immigrants. For me, it's important for my work to have meaning and mission. *To Be (a Woman)* has a clear one of bringing the honest, raw stories of women to (hopefully) a broad audience.

I am very in tune with what I call intuition but I think might be what others call a "witch" sensibility. I know when something isn't right and what people I will vibe with. I have learned to trust myself fully in these feelings and follow them.

I abandoned organized religion long ago and for good reason. My parents entered me into the cult Institute of Basic Life Principles when I was fifteen and drove away. I wrote about that a bit in this collection. That experience has deeply informed my sense of self.

How would you describe your poetic style? From which authors do you draw inspiration?

I started in free verse, but I think I have leaned into prose more recently. I didn't find reading poetry that accessible until I started writing more myself and have enjoyed many books by many talented writers, thinkers, and artists. One thing that has inspired me are lists of poetry prompts that I find on social media. I have been particularly drawn to those by Thistle and Thread, Arcana Poetry Press, and Chris Kads. That's just to name a few. Presses and individuals typically release these monthly. I save them and if I am having a lackluster day, I might pull one up and think about how the prompts connect to me. Writing for themes, like your theme of rebirth also provides a lot of inspiration.

What was the most rewarding moment you experienced in the writing process?

Connection! I posted something about what we should expect from healthy relationships, and a certain relative of mine reached out stating that this was not what they had experienced in their marriage. I had never talked to this person before about their relationship, and it was through putting writing into the world that we had the conversation. That stands out. I have included the piece "Like That" here.

I wrote a poem about my sister and read it to her and she liked it. It felt good to share with her how I see her. That piece, "Stellar Nebula," is in *To Be (a Woman)*.

Connecting with other artists and women in the literary world has been really empowering, and I have found a place to belong in a world where I previously felt quite alienated. Having this back and forth with you, for example, is part of the beauty that the literary world has created in my life.

If you could offer one piece of advice to aspiring poets, what would it be?

DO NOT THROW AWAY OR DELETE ANYTHING. Pause and write when inspiration hits, use your notes app and get the words down. Then I would say choose a couple

of literary magazines you like and send out some poems. Don't be disheartened by rejection; I have a less than 5% acceptance rate.

What do you hope readers will take away from your book?

I think that is again about connection. When people read *To Be (a Woman)* I want them to feel that they learned something about themselves. I want people to feel seen and included. Poetry is a place to really find that you are not alone. It's not like fiction or even non-fiction; it's a place to discover that others are just as odd as you because we all see the world a little differently, and that's special and deserves to be captured.

I have a couple of pieces I would like to share:

Like many women I was in a very bad relationship during the pandemic with an alcoholic who eroded my self-worth. I had a rebirth when I started valuing myself more and through that I also found a relationship that is filled with positivity, equity, and transparency. This is the poem "Like That," which I spoke of earlier. It was first published in *Inside Voice*.

Like That

Rachel Turney

Equal, partnership

Love should be just like that

Unembarrassed, free of guilt, shame, doubt, or self-consciousness

Love should be like that

Happy, light, easy, beautiful

That's what love is

Balance, complimentary, smooth, peaceful

It should feel like that

Exciting, engrossing, wake up in the morning elated to talk to you

That's what love is like

Perfect, rich, delicious, parallel

Love should be like that

"Gotta" is the first poem of mine that *redrosethorns* published in their online space that started our connection. This will likely appear towards the beginning of the finalized collection. This piece is about finding yourself through all of the things other people tell you. It's also about taking good advice. This is about the rebirth I chose/gave to myself.

Gotta

Rachel Turney

My mom's dad told me
you can be anything you want to be,
but you gotta get your education.

My mom's mom told me
you can buy anything you want to buy,
but you gotta invest in property.

My dad's dad told me
you can go anywhere you want to go,
but you gotta learn and know the dangers;
respect other people.

My dad's mom told me
you can be alone; you can do it on your own,
but you gotta be wise and shrewd.

My mom told me
you can have a great career and help others too;,
but you gotta keep your balance.

My dad told me
you can be an athlete, strong and capable,
but you gotta train and practice.

My sister told me
you can be an artist,
but you gotta ignore the critics.

My brother told me
you can overcome,
but you gotta be tougher than the pull.

My kid sister told me
you can love completely,
but you gotta accept that it's not a weakness.

My friends told me

you can do it; you can do absolutely anything
you want to do,
but you gotta stay realistic; stay grounded.

I told myself
I can achieve any and every goal,
but I gotta decide
which ones are mine.

This is the short piece I wrote based on your theme of rebirth. It's a little literal, but I actually find the idea of cliché relatable, and I think it can make poetry approachable.

Métamorphose

Rachel Turney

I am emerging and reemerging.
I am translucent; I am fully formed.
Over and over again.
Encore et encore.
Without any applause.
Just like every woman.

Books coming in 2026:

Record Player Life with The Poetry Lighthouse

Retired Wannabe Club Kid with Parlyaree Press

To Be (a Woman) with Red Rose Thorns (redrosethorns.com/redrosethornspress)

Women Making Soup Together with Vinegar Press



@azmartinian

Aline Martinian *Goddess of the Stars*

Third Pregnancy, Night Shift

Veronica Tucker

Eight months swollen, I pronounce
my first death of the night.

The paper gown crinkles

over my enormous belly
while I listen for silence
in another chest. Time of death:

0247. My son kicks
against my ribs as I
initial the chart. He doesn't know

he's dancing in a room
with the newly dead,
doesn't feel me split

between this life
leaving and his
insisting its way in.

The family weeps.
I rest one hand
on the still-warm shoulder,

one hand on my own
taut skin, feel him
swimming in his salt sea,

oblivious. This is what
no one tells you: how
you'll carry both

at once, how your body
becomes the threshold
where everything passes through,

the dying and the unborn,
the last breath and
the first flutter.

By morning I'll have
signed three more
death certificates, felt him

hiccup through them all.
He is learning
the rhythm of this work:

systole, diastole,
hello, goodbye,
the heart that holds it all.

What the Body Remembers

Veronica Tucker

My hands know
before my mind does,
the way a belly

hardens before
abruption, the specific
resistance of a chest

that won't come back.
Three births taught me
how the body knows

its own breaking,
how it prepares
in secret: colostrum

weeks before labor,
ligaments loosening,
the cervix ripening

like fruit. Now
in the ED I feel it,
which patient holds

their pain in the way
that means appendix,
which shallow breathing

signals the lung
already collapsed.
This is the knowing

they can't teach
in residency: how
the body speaks

a language older
than words, how
my hands move

to the right spot
before imaging
confirms it.

My daughters have this.

I watch my eldest
touch her throat

when strep is coming,
see her body
prepare, protect.

We are made
of this knowledge,
cellular, ancient,

the way a seed
knows to split,
knows when to push

toward light.
Each body
its own oracle,

each birth
and death and
healing teaching us

to trust
what we feel
before we see it.



Stephenie Kahn *Grace*

How did you begin your journey as a painter?

I started writing and painting at seven years old. My great-grandmother did not want me to play outside in the street. She gave me letter writing paper to draw on. She used to sharpen my pencils with a knife. I used to draw pictures and write poems and pictures to go with it.

Where do you find inspiration for your art?

I used to find refuge in the woods as a child in Massachusetts. I found my spirituality there. I found the Oneness of the Divine there. I celebrated the divine through my art and with symbols. The Catholic Church of my childhood very much influenced my art. There were gold inlay and seraphim. The ceiling was a cobalt color with white stars. I was six years old and did not pay attention to the service, but admired and was greatly influenced by what was in my childhood church. My paintings were influenced by Sufism and the feminine. My paintings tell my story of being a spiritual woman in the woods of New England and the fauna. Usually, I paint angels and veiled women like Miriam holding a child in her lap.

Tell us about a particular artist who has influenced your work.

I have been inspired by several artists, mostly Van Gogh and Gustav Klimt. I love using gold. I love using patterns and I like bright colors. I love the pre-Raphaelite art and Christian icons' use of gold. I am also a symbolist. My paintings are illustrations telling stories.

What advice would you give an artist just beginning?

Find their own style. Don't copy anyone else. Find other like-minded people. Don't be afraid to take risks. Know your audience.

What are your next projects?

Mostly, I send my illustrations to magazines and try to find time to do it, to write good poetry and read to an audience. I enjoy being with like-minded people, not just artists but spiritually-minded people to form support groups and share good friendships.

Unapologetically Me: A Journey of Rebirth in My 30s

Urmi Hossain

I loved being in my 20s—you were no longer considered underage. You could finally get your driver's license. You were living your best life, and you were allowed to make mistakes. The 20s felt like a cool moment of my life. No stress, no worries, and no obligations. You lived your life freely, like a bird.

For a moment, I thought I would stay in my 20s forever. I didn't want to go back in time or even move forward. If anyone asked me, "What were your favorite years?" or "What age would you like to stay forever?" I would have said exactly that—to stay in my 20s.

Then, as my 20s were almost over, getting closer and closer to my 30s, I thought, "Oh my god! I have to let go of my youth." As a woman living in a society that constantly judges age, I feared being seen as "too old," no longer vibrant or desirable, no longer invisible to judgment. I wanted to stop time and never reach that day when I would turn 30. But we know that no one has the power to stop time, and in one way or another, I had to face my reality.

I started speaking and opening up with other women in my circle who were already in their 30s. Some questions I thought of: Did they feel shy when they turned 30? Were they called old by society? To my surprise, their answers were the opposite of what I expected:

- *"I love being in my 30s."*
- *"In your 30s, you care less about people's opinions."*
- *"In your 30s, you are finally becoming unapologetic."*

With a drop in positivity, I started to shift my mindset and see aging as wisdom, lived experiences, and the freedom to finally define myself on my own terms.

At first, I hadn't wished to celebrate my 30th birthday until family and friends threw me a party. I realized in that moment that I should celebrate myself and every phase of my life. I saw the day I turned 30 as a point in time to reinvent and redefine myself. I practiced the advice that other women in their 30s gave me:

- *"Be unapologetic"*
- *"Don't listen to other people's opinions."*

Little by little, I started by redefining my relationships. Who do I want to have in my life? What kind of friends deserve to be part of my circle? While in your 20s, your circle might consist of hundreds of people who add you randomly on Facebook; in my 30s, my circle shrank because I learned the value of supportive and encouraging people. If friends don't bring peace and laughter, it is worth letting them go.

In my 30s, I also learned about boundaries — a scary but necessary thing to implement. How do you say no to what doesn't serve you? How can you say no without feeling guilty? I realized that you can't pour from an empty cup. If you don't serve yourself first, no one else will. Slowly, I started to set boundaries to protect my energy, time, and needs.

While society and culture teach us to follow norms and expectations, I told myself: I'll do the opposite. It's okay not to follow the same path as everyone else. It's okay to follow your dreams and chase the moon. In my 30s, I decided to explore different endeavors. Yes, I had my day-to-day job, but what was wrong with exploring hobbies and maybe turning some into passions? Slowly, I tapped into my fears and uncertainty, trying different activities—creating content, writing my book, sharing my story online, and being vulnerable. There was a worry about being judged, but people's judgments don't define me — my actions do.

My willingness to write, continue my studies, and create content defined my passion, determination, and persistence. By tapping into my talents and potential, I realized I was achieving my goals. I was a go-getter.

I saw a shift in my identity. I was no longer the version of Urmi who was obedient, following rules, and doing a standard 9-to-5 job. I had become the butterfly I was meant to be. My 30s symbolize my rebirth — an Urmi willing to try different endeavors, who dreams big, embraces new experiences, and is finally unapologetic.

I was finally out of my shell, putting myself out there by speaking at different engagements I was once shy about. In my 30s, I gave webinars, workshops, led presentations, and even flew overseas to be a panelist at a conference. People reached out for guidance, mentorship, and advice. I had finally given myself permission to follow my heart and trust my intuition.

Friends and family saw my transformation. They told me, "You do so many things. It's incredible." I finally started to appreciate my 30s and love myself for who I was becoming.

My definition of being a woman has changed. It's no longer about performing, shrinking, pleasing, or fitting a role. It's about acceptance, embracing yourself, and self-trust. Every decade of life symbolizes a significant moment. Our 20s teach us to be carefree, adventurous, and a little naïve. Our 30s give us the chance to transform and step fully into who we are meant to be. I can happily say that I love being in my 30s. My 30s have been my rebirth — a decade of becoming who I was always meant to be.

The Thaw

Stephenie Khan

The crystallized branches coated with ice
glisten against a blue neon sky
The bristling breeze and river
flow fluidly through her fingers, drowning in totality

Her eyes shut poignantly
Her face is euphoric and impassioned
Each string vibrates within the galaxies of atoms
Particles whirl and dance, moving here and there,
keeping with the tempo, Morning Ragas
woven into the Tapestry of Time
with each particle, each thread of Light, various hues
representing each soul sparkling in the river

The child bathes and plays
Time is infinite,
like the cadence of the sitar
The current is sourceless,
back to the ocean with no beginning or end
towards eternity
The golden sunlight shimmering through
black, damp, hidden branches,
crosses intersecting with each other
Glowing, uneven geometric shapes,
the spaces in between—
so much divine, inner meaning

The only sound of ice cracking,
boughs of trees groaning
with the weight of the ice
Snaps, falls, and it's done, dead silence.
A hawk can be seen swooping,
eyeing its prey—a rabbit—
swoops down with its talons,
catches its victim

In a split second, it disappears and flies away
The cathedral of frozen fingers,
steeple and stained glass
that hold up the eternal sky,
thawing like rain

Omnificent perfection,
the cycle of the sun above it
counts the time
Sacred ground, kneel down in the wet snow
All the prayers muttered on reverent lips
Awe, one breathes in and out
One lays down naked and vulnerable,
making angels in the brittle snow

Ice thaws, cracking
Face filled with frozen tears
Direct your face to the burning light
and feel your heart thaw
within the hidden space of the womb
and embrace of the Mother,
within the hidden space of grottoes of angel wings
Comforted by her,
the primordial grave
with the hope of resurrection and redemption
Thawing and melting gracefully,
souls falling towards spring's end
to give birth to paradise,
passion flowers and white calla lilies



Loyrey *Letting Go*

Rebirth in a Desert

Paula Marie Brown

Birth, death, rebirth greets us all.
I rebirthed in a desert.
But first, I held him in my arms,
kissed him one last time,
he took his last breath.

Button, our cat, curled up on his chest,
closed her eyes and slept.
I wept. The Goddess came.

I wandered into the desert that day.
In her dryness, my tears dropped like rain.
My heart rolled in her sands.

For many lost days, many cold night,
grief salted, scorched, screamed through me.
I walked, talked, slept with the Goddess.
Her moon, her stars caressed my storm.
The souls of my feet found their way.

One day my grief walked into an oasis.
My eyes greeted a water well.
I sensed sacred 'Rebirth' lived here.

In the darkness,
the 'Queen of the Night' cactus opened.
My nose kneeled
to her single flower bloom.
With one deep sniff,
my heart stopped bleeding
on her rocks.
My tongue tasted his kisses,
one last time.

When dawn rose, his light was gone.
Bent over, parched and shredded,

I gulped up healing waters from that well.
I rested under the shade of a Broom tree.
She swept away my grief. I smiled. I let him go.

I rebirthed in a desert that day.
Now, I walk differently.
Now, I kiss differently.

Where the Streetlights Learn Her Name

Eagle Moon

The streetlights come on
and snow begins to fall.

She lies on the ground,
tears slipping from her eyes,
blood at her nose,
the world dim and far away.

She tries to scream.
No sound arrives.

Then he is there.

Wings brushed with gold,
eyes full of life,
full of a kindness that does not rush.

Come with me, child.
I will keep you safe.

Will mommy be okay?

Yes.

She will be just fine.

Okay then,
because I am tired.

He lifts her gently,
carries her to the land in between,
where Mamusa meets the child
and shows her her truth.

He lifts her again.
His wings widen.
Her smile brightens.

Light gathers in her chest,
yellow and pink,
soft as breath.

Come, he says.

She giggles.
Thank you, Mamusa.
They were right about you.

She hugs him.

Then he carries her into the sun,
where two angels wait,
and a sudden breeze
moves through many colors.

And just like that,
she is back in her living room,
folding laundry,
FaceTiming her sister.

On God, I swear,
parents are ridiculous.

I know, right.
Some things never change.

They laugh.

Then a flicker.
A pause.

A small flame
appears on the television,
as if something holy lingered
just long enough to be remembered





Lisa Gardner *Emerging Anew*

Reborn from a Dream

Kathryne McCracken

It was a magic carpet; one that, just like Aladdin's, would take me to "A Whole New World." My grandparents brought it back from Turkey when I was two. When I touched it, I could feel the vibrations of a distant, mystical land of sultans and princesses riding camels and drinking spiced tea in courtyards with ornate mosaic fountains. I did my third-grade country report on Turkey. I finished my presentation with, "I will go there, someday." Then, with my intention firmly set into the Universe's plan, I went on with my life.

At the start of my senior year in high school, I learned of the opportunity to do a gap year abroad with AFS Intercultural Programs. That January, I checked the box "Let AFS Choose" and submitted my application. A giant packet arrived in April with information about the destination AFS chose for me: Turkey. Oh yeah, Universe, you heard me!

August arrived and I was on the plane. As we taxied past the tower at Portland airport, I started to cry. Not just cry, but gut-wrenching sobs, the kind that come all the way from your toes and shake your whole body. It made no sense. I was off on the trip of a lifetime, a year abroad to a magical destination I had dreamed of my whole life. Then, out the window, I saw it, "death mountain." Mt. Hood killed my friends at Oregon Episcopal School. A black cloud of death hung over the school my last three years there. It still does for those of us who experienced mortality far too young. The wheels left the ground and I stopped crying. Suddenly, I felt free as we headed East, leaving Mt. Hood and death behind.

After an overnight orientation in New York and a long layover in Brussels, we landed in the magical city of Istanbul, Turkey. The AFS reps met us, got us through customs and out to a motor coach. I sat down and looked up at a giant red digital clock at the front of the coach just in time to see it change from 23:59 to 00:00. It was literally and figuratively a new day, a blank slate, a new country, a new me. I could become anything or anyone I wanted to be. So, I did.

For about a decade, I took a few more trips back to the Middle East and traveled extensively around the United States, until the fated morning I landed at the Savannah airport. I drove over the bridge to the South Carolina Lowcountry, where I went gaga over the old live oaks dripping with Spanish moss and the humidity that felt like a soft warm hug. I have always been sensitive to the energy of place. I am a natural redhead and can trace my heritage back to the witch trials in Scotland on my father's

side and to a Salem witch on my mother's. I had my astrology done and most of my planets are in Earth signs. I haven't yet been able to determine if I am feeling the energy of the place or my energetic connection to the place, but I knew the South Carolina Lowcountry would soon be my new home.

I went back to Portland, packed up my stuff, and a few months later took my first one-way trip, a redeye back to Savannah. It was early January when I left behind a dark, cold, dreary, drizzly Portland to wake up the next morning and walk out into 70-degree sunshine. I got a rental car and drove to my new apartment on Hilton Head Island. I walked out on the balcony overlooking a beautiful lagoon and looked down at the five-foot alligator sunning himself on the bank. "Well, hello my prehistoric friend!"

It wasn't long before I realized the office job I'd taken was not for me. I sat out on my balcony with my new toothy friend looking up at me and said, "Okay Universe, you brought me here and I'm not leaving! You must have something in mind for me, what is it?!" I went back inside and turned on the TV, and there was my answer, an ad for the South Carolina Educational Lottery and the Technical College of the Lowcountry. I looked them up, and they have a fabulous allied healthcare program with lots of disciplines to choose from, so I signed up to meet with an advisor. A couple of days later, I went to campus to meet with them. "Hi, I'm the Massage Therapy Program Director." Before I could even respond, I heard a loving, woman's voice coming from the ether whisper in my ear, "We've been waiting for you."

Now, here's the part that makes this guidance from Goddess super cool! I had only had two massages in my life, and I joke that they were "court ordered" as they were gift certificates for working overtime. But biology has always been my favorite subject. Is there anything cooler on this planet than life? There was just one thing about working with the body—bodily fluids. Nope, a shockingly responsive gag reflex prevented me from being a nurse or doctor. But, massage therapy, an opportunity to work with the body with no bodily fluids?! YES! The year of massage school went quickly. I was chosen graduate of the year, got my license, and went to work.

I was introduced to Reiki while I was a massage therapy student, and it resonated deeply with me. After the Mt. Hood tragedy, school changed from coursework and exams to memorial services and celebrations of life. I wasn't angry that this happened, I was seething at God that he could allow this to happen! At one of the celebrations of life with my fingernails digging into the palms of my hands and my body shaking with anger, a sudden peace washed through me, and every cell filled with the most brilliant light of love. My hands released and I just wanted to open my arms, lean my head back

and embrace the Universe with love.

I took my first Reiki class shortly after massage school in a haunted, hot pink Victorian mansion outside of Charleston, SC. I knew from my experience back in high school that it was part of my path to become a Reiki Master Teacher to share the peace and light with others. I saw that there was a class taught by Bill Rand, the founder of the International Center for Reiki Training, coming up in Portland. I put the question to the Universe, “Is it time to become a Reiki Master and is this the class?” and I went to the movies. I came out and there was a praying mantis sitting on the windshield of my car, and I knew that one way or another, I had my answer. I escorted the little fellow off the car and went home to look up the meaning of the praying mantis animal totem. The first thing that came up was, “The praying mantis animal totem is the totem of Reiki Masters.” That would be a hard YES! It was proven so when I met a woman in the class who would become a dear friend and with whom I would co-teach my first Reiki class the following spring at my new home on Hilton Head.

I’m about to celebrate my 18th year as a Licensed Massage Therapist and am only just feeling comfortable calling myself a healer. I live in a retirement destination, so most of my clients are looking to reap the rewards of years of hard work and saving to enjoy their retirement. Most of them have spent their lives in a culture that does not appreciate the body; it is a storage unit for the brain, and if anything hurts, there’s a pill for that.

Pain, be it emotional or physical, is a natural part of life, but it is not a natural part of aging. Pain is not just stored in our brain; it is stored throughout our body, and chronic pain comes from not addressing acute pain, or the cause of the issue. The longer it gets covered up and ignored, the deeper it goes and tighter it holds on, and that is when conventional medicine simply writes it off as “age.” Like the women of my lineage healed, I’ve learned to heal with a gentle touch and deep empathy. Each knot is part of someone’s life story, so it is so important to treat it with kindness and let it release the pain of the past without forcing it. Embracing this valuable lesson has been my birth into my life as a healer, and I’m honored to help my clients as the pain of their past melts away so they too can be reborn into the life of which they have dreamed.

Rebirthday

Sue Bara

My firstborn initiated me into Motherhood –
a month early, under duress,
neither of us ready for an early appearance,
and yet I labored –
one breath, one prayer at a time.

The Holy Mother carried me,
knowing what it's like to arrive
from a rough ride into foreign territory,
life distinctly pared down to the essentials –
one breath, one prayer, one push at a time.

My firstborn now begins a third decade of life,
surrendering to a deep inner call,
transitioning from the inside out,
and we begin again –
one breath, one prayer, one layer at a time.

As we are baptized in these new birth waters,
the Holy Mother offers Her reflection of a holy family –
a bond of unconditional Love and devotion
through challenge and even persecution –
one breath, one prayer, one commitment at a time.

I know nothing of this new Motherhood path I'm on,
though it's begun much the same –
tender, confusing, hopeful, terrifying.
I do know that nothing will stop my labor of Love –
one breath, one prayer, one choice at a time.



Kathy Lytle *Mother Tree of Life*

Union

Nina Martucci

I smell like dirt and sweat and sex
I can't be naked enough today
I want to meld my body to the earth
becoming the soil so the ants
can't tell the difference between me
and their mounds

I have grown the deepest roots
that curl and reach deep down
to the mantle until they must recoil
from the heat of the core

My arms upstretch as twisted branches
towards the vast sky
rubbing up against the space beyond
and birds make their homes there
singing all the songs I want to hear

As the breeze flows into my lungs
it feeds my cells the
scent of the ether
and I exhale transformed

I know now I am the universe
and it is me

New Life Rebirthing

Renya Craig

With pen in hand, a pause of reflection enters my space where the past meets the present. It is here where I find myself deeply connected to the stories of all the women throughout the ages, stowed away in secrecy with quill by candlelight, writing their innermost truths when speaking up wasn't possible.

Flashing forward to current time, while experiencing bleed through soul memories of eras gone by, the following is what I am compelled to write in support of the *Quill of the Goddess*.

We women still find ourselves living in a world out of balance surrounded by a whirlwind of yang energy. After a long sigh, I whisper under my breath, "If I were a Goddess, what would I do? My inner voice answers, "I am a Goddess."

The moment these words emerge from my depth, I spot a Siberian husky walking down the street. This regal creature of wolf-like appearance is a wake-up call to remember that the Goddess courses through my veins. Just like that, I am remembering the mythical wisdom stored in ancestral memory. Artemis lives in me as an untamed, primal spirit protector living on purpose, both nurturing and capable of unleashing ferocity. I am a lady of wild things, one of countless wild women walking upon the earth in these catastrophic times knowing that it is time to Rise Up for the sake of the pack, and future generations.

Standing on the precipice of birthing change, amidst a fractured world having lost its way, many of us are trusting in Spirit that pulses through the seed of life and its natural origin cycles. We are paying attention. We are listening, hearing, and responding to the inner call. Building a backbone of trusting these turning times beyond our limited outer sight.

A few years ago, I was awakened from deep sleep in the middle of the night by a familiar energy that I knew as Joan of Arc. Her visitation and message traveled straight to my heart. "It's time to gather the Army of Love." She was referring to the women of the world. Years following this experience, a resonant soul sister confided in me that she too received a similar message from Joan's spirit. Hearing this felt like an arrow hitting a bullseye target.

Connecting with the power of vision and voice beyond the earth realm was not something completely foreign to me, having surfed the cosmos through meditation for many years. Even still, I found myself unable to access how to integrate and actualize the enormity of this sacred transmission. For years, I had quietly promised myself to trust, commit to, and

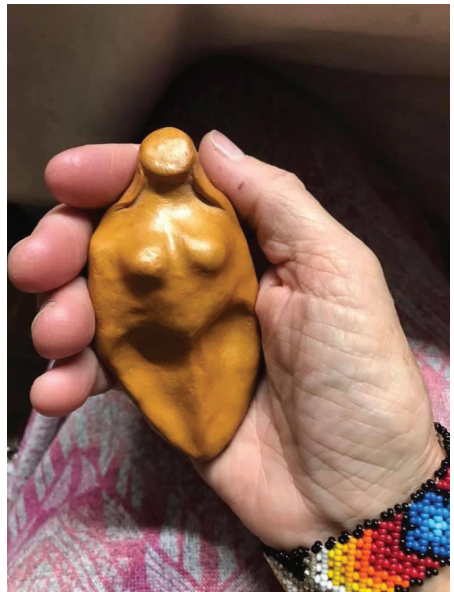
develop the practice of inner listening. Here was the heart of spirit being served up in such a powerful way, and all I could tap into was the feeling of being inadequate and incapable of responding.

One day, out of the fog, a spiral connection cracked open which plunked me back on a trail of an experience that changed the course of my life focus in the 90s. Remembering this, my body immediately took a warrior woman stance in the middle of the street. Instead of whispering this time, I blurted out, “I can do this! I can rise to the occasion!”

It is time to tell my story. The year was 1997. I was 40 years young when I first heard the call of the divine feminine lineage piercing through the veil. The earth*spirit calling arrived in the form of a deeply personal ritual unlike anything that occurred to me before. The request urged me to collect, witness and commune with my monthly flowing blood in a clear glass jar. After a couple weeks of doing so, I was struck one evening, under the radiance of the moon, to honor myself as a woman. Retreating outside, I dug a small hole in the moist midnight soil. Pouring my menstrual blood into Mother Earth, I invoked a spontaneous prayer asking to receive knowledge about the mystery of women’s power. Seconds later, the word “MaWombA” began pulsing through the canal of my right ear. Over and over again, I chanted “Mawomba” in crescendo knowing that women all over the world were joining me.

This transformational soul experience re-awakened ancient remembrance that led me down a rabbit hole. Along the way, I learned that in West African ancient creation myths, ‘Mawu’ is known as the Great Goddess of the Universe. She is viewed as the elderly wise woman, Supreme Being, who gives birth to form through clay. This awareness landed in my lap shrouded in mystery and intrigue. There was more, and it has taken months and years to sink into my pores.

MaWombA was having its way with me through the power of vision and voice synchronicity. Just like the fierce Dahomey Amazon women of the 17th to 19th centuries, I have found myself creating palm-size clay



Renya Craig, *Healing the Womb of the World*

figurines of women in devotion to the Great Mother of the Divine Feminine, and communing with them daily for strength and fortitude.

Retelling this story holds as much power now as it did all those years ago. I know this because truthbumps on my skin are telling me so. I wonder, as I share this intimate story, what you might be thinking. Whatever it is, I hope it stirs you.

In this moment, I draw you close to sit with me as you read the rest of my heart's unearthing. Alongside the vibrations of the wayward system derailing, there's a wave. I know you can feel it. We Goddesses are being called to Unite and Rise Up, to take our rightful place, to fulfill our part in the human design. No more hiding away. No more waiting.

It cannot be denied that in silent moments of communing with spirit we sense sacred mystery at work beneath the surface. Our own inner knowing, and attunement with a myriad of cultural prophecies, points to a New World emerging.

Rebirth is at hand. A new season of our lives is taking shape. Women's Wisdom is the light of the world showing the way. Stability is the rooting and interconnectedness with the nature world. Empowerment is essential in owning our bodies and setting our boundless spirits free. We are being asked from the Heart of Spirit to Trust the Unknown.

As women, we know intuitively how to birth. We know about deep breathing, surrendering, trust, and holding space wide open. Biological mothers or not, we are all midwives for our precious Earth Mother. We are a powerful energy containing seeds of love and remembrance. Our wombs are rhythmic water drums of wisdom, power, beauty and grace for the circle of life. With courage through harmony and union we merge, with Mother Earth and the Ancient Ones in the sky, our way forward in support of the awakening pathway of transformation.

With every breath, every step, every choice, it is essential that we embody our thread in the tapestry. To carry on the lineage of the Goddess is why we are here. Our souls know the way. When We Women Unite, we crack open the seeds of potency and possibility. The nectar of beauty, blessing, resilience, and resourcefulness magnifies. Weaving the depth of being, seeing, feeling, we discuss and resolve matters of the heart. As our wisdom ways continue to root, rise, and expand, we weave the fulfillment of our sacred earth walk.

Sisters, keep on dusting off your quills, visions and dreams dedicated to healing the Womb of the World and revealing the New Horizon. The only question to ask of our Goddess-imbued soul memory is "What is mine to do?"

I have a vision. It is meant to be spread throughout our global network representing the divine principle at work in today's world. In this time of critical Rising, we must keep on

believing in the Women's Pathway of Purpose and Potentiality. Listening deeply within our soulseeds for our sacred instructions from the Heart of One, we must continue to emerge from our cocoons. Respecting ourselves through the winds of change, we must speak our Truth with passion and walk our path with Courage. Our Time is NOW. Our Time is Today. In the belly is New Life Rebirthing.



Andrea Redmond *Received*

Imbolg

R S Kendle

as my grandmothers fade
riverrun in the freshet

frothy rush of syllables
that pool in the expectant delta

swell of songs
that warm our lips on dark nights

we beseech the land to awaken
fill thickened air

with the chime of braided voices
rising through hushed earth

as we hold the hymn of rebirth
deep within our bellies

and the herons return to my dreams

Says Who

Amy Segerstrom

It doesn't take much to be considered a difficult woman. That is why there are so many of us. —Jane Goodall

In the late 19th century,
it was believed that if a woman traveled
at 50 mph or more on a train,
her uterus would fly out of her body,

and while we women are now allowed to board trains,
we will never give up our Goddess powers,

which means that, though I am capable
of restraining my uterus from unseemly urges,
occasionally, I consent to let it fly around the house unchecked,

so when my husband remarks,
“Don't you think it's time you give it a rest?”

I wink and remind him: “That's not what you said last night.”

Meanwhile, my uterus hovers nearby,
and when he is not looking, taps his shoulder
before whooshing skyward.

Needless to say,
my womb and I are quite satisfied.
Difficult? Yes.
And utterly, supremely satisfied.

Rebirth

Palnata7 (English name Robbi Wilson)

I started going through intimate, unhealthy codependent relationships since I was 17, losing myself time and again, with no true sense of self. It didn't help that I was active in my addictions, literally killing my spirit. As a young mother, I never let my daughter see me cry. I had to figure out how to navigate through deeply embedded feelings and experiences such as mistrust, guilt, shame, loneliness—and the strongest feeling of all was that I didn't belong anywhere.

In my newfound sobriety, I learned how to pray and Spirit heard me. I submitted myself to cultural initiation in our Indigenous winter ceremonies. I died spiritually and was reborn back into our Indigenous community. My cultural teacher said when you take care of Spirit, Spirit takes care of you. I was also told that once winter season ended, I was to care for my Spirit and go wherever ceremonies were being held to keep myself on a good path.

I took that advice quite literally and have been very blessed, because Spirit has taken me to many places and connected me to many Goddesses over the years. My first experience was in Hawaii and feeling the powerful Goddess of Fire, Pele. It was eclipse season and a fitting time to release more of my life's heaviness of being over-responsible for others. My codependent nature ran deep, and I was unlearning and relearning, through my healing process, to get back to my true self.

Many years after my time in Hawaii, Spirit brought me to the Goddess figure of Mary Magdalene, and I found myself in Avebury, Stonehenge, and Glastonbury in the United Kingdom. My natural love of water had me being cleansed as I walked barefoot through the waters at Chalice Well. I also spent time in the Glastonbury Abbey, lying on the ground where the Michael and Mary ley lines crossed. I was baptized as a child because my late parents felt this was best for me, but I have never been religious. For some reason, I needed to feel the energies of Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland. I stood amazed looking at the stained glass and art; there were visible Indigenous depictions which looked to be from Native Americans in the Midwest of North America. I have been blessed to always see the parallels of various wellness approaches with Indigenous and non-Indigenous holistic healing modalities and practices.

As a single parent, I had to be the father and mother to my daughter. I would get impatient with her when she would be emotional or crying. I had witnessed and experienced this myself as a child. My late parents had both attended residential school and passed on

this learned behavior. I realize this was no fault of theirs, and I felt this need to keep healing and cleaning and clearing. I was starting to realize that the rebirths also required, of course, a death of sorts first. As time went on in my healing journey, I started to understand how to access the higher frequencies that would balance my Divine Masculine with my newfound Divine Feminine aspects of self. Spirit kept strengthening me with these incredible death and rebirth opportunities leading me to much needed powerful Divine Feminine energies.

This did not happen overnight. My entire life was expanding and contracting, like how our bodies do as we give birth. When I met the Goddess of Motherhood, Isis, in Egypt at the Philae temple, I cried uncontrollably, fully sensing my late mother. Isis' magic and power peeled away more layers of that false sense of self and all that no longer served me. Spirit works in incredible ways, because the pandemic had just broke and the flights allowed my daughter and I to travel from Canada, then connect through England to Egypt. I never would have thought in a million years I would find myself in that part of the world.

My latest connection was through meditation and mirror work, where I felt the fierce Goddess Kali, who firmly strengthened my sense of self in her no-nonsense manner. My daughter shared the process of mirror work with me, and I was hesitant at first, yet I trusted the process. The experience was so powerful, and I was anchored so much deeper in my heart and soul.

Spirit, led me to many incredible Goddesses, helping me reclaim my power. I am choosing to embrace all of the Goddess that I am. I have shared these experiences with my adult daughter and witnessed her spiritual death and rebirths too, such incredible intergenerational healing! I live in gratitude for the most important connection of all, to myself. I have found my sense of belonging, which is within my heart. I had to tear down the walls I built around my heart, be vulnerable and allow my tears to fall. I have found my voice, and my discovery of our chakras, sacred geometry, astrology and quantum physics have led me to continue to evolve. Change can be scary, yet peeling away the layers of hurt and trauma, especially those which span generations has been so worth it!

I maintain my trust in Spirit to take care of me, leading me safely to many loving, powerful Goddesses that helped me feel stronger in myself. I have learned to be patient with myself, trust my intuition, and instead of always being a yes person, I can maintain strong boundaries and say no without guilt. My latest travels in 2024, took me to Peru to experience Rainbow Mountain, hiking thru the Sacred Valley, to Machu Pichu, and getting to Lake Titicaca in Bolivia. Spirit is still caring for me and brining me to where I need to experience in this lifetime through this human body. I am a firm believer that because I

prayed with heartfelt intention, many years ago after Halloween 2003, my path continues to bring me to amazing people and places!

In my Indigenous culture, the societies were matriarchal, and that way of being has been severely altered for generations. I do this work for myself, my late grandmothers, late mother, myself and my daughter. I have only known my grandmother on my father's side of the family, and I see the difference healing has made over the years. I am glad that I have always followed my curiosity and stayed open to other people's ways of being. I have taken the time to put in the deep healing work, and I love to share what I have experienced, unlearned and learned with others.

My wish for anyone reading this, is that you explore the death and rebirth cycles for yourself, and I believe you will have the ability to embrace the Goddess that you are as well! Our mind is powerful once we make the decision to put self first. When travel to incredible places is beyond reach, our imagination can also connect us in just as effective ways. This hasn't been an easy path, but trusting in Spirit has led me to amazing Goddesses who have helped me stand more firm in who I am, I am, I am all that I am; and so it is, and so it is, and so it is.

Contributors' Index

Sue Bara is a lifelong mystic and nature lover. A spiritual quest ignited when her Catholic upbringing could not satiate her longing to know the Divine. She has practiced Earth-based, indigenous, and Eastern spiritual traditions and herbal medicine ways, finding purpose and peace within the arms of the Divine Feminine. Writing has been a foundation for processing and sharing her discoveries, with visual arts emerging over the past five years.

Katja Boehm is an Earthling, wife and mother, apprentice to frog, water and red clover. She is a health psychologist and works for a university in Germany as well as for a trauma competence center. Her love for poetry and Shamanism is like her heartbeat, her lifeline.

Paula Marie Brown is a soul-spirited poet rooted in the sacred lands of Aotearoa, New Zealand. Currently a parent care-giver, she is also the budding visionary behind Souldāla Expressions, a sacred offering in the art of soul-spirited writing. Her work invites divine feminine women to awaken, explore, and express the language of their soul. Paula honors women's sacred remembering. Her work calls forth the sacred, sage and sovereign within us.

Renya Craig She Writes/She Clays. Deepening relationship with Earth*Spirit insight, wisdom, and mystery.

Karen Elias is an artist/activist, using photography and collage to record the beauty and fragility of the natural world and to try to make sense of life on our troubled planet. In addition to numerous publications, her award-winning work appears in private collections and galleries. *Heart Speaks, Is Spoken For*, and *Small Earthly Space*, ekphrastic collaborations with poet Marjorie Maddox, appeared in 2022 and 2025, respectively, both from Shanti Arts. She is also a writer and playwright; several of her plays have been produced, both here in the U.S. and internationally.

Lisa JH Gardner is a mixed media artist who earned her BA in fine/commercial art from Saint Francis College in Indiana. She has been creating art since she was a child. Lisa is on the board of directors and the ritual committee for Sophia's Portico, a feminine art and spirituality center.

Astrea Sophia Gold is a poet, writer and creative guide. You can find out more about her and her work by visiting www.astreasophiagold.com and shortstorylovers.com/astreasophiagold.

Urmi Hossain is a self-published author, speaker, podcast host, and finance professional based in Canada. She holds the CFA and CAIA designations and works in the financial services industry, while actively advocating for women's empowerment, identity, and self-leadership. Her book, *Discovering Your Identity: A Rebirth from Interracial Struggle*, explores her journey as a third-culture woman navigating belonging, culture, and self-worth. Urmi also hosts *Stories Beyond Borders*, a podcast amplifying diverse voices on identity, migration, language, and the meaning of home. She serves as Co-Chair of Women in Leadership's Montreal Chapter and is passionate about public speaking, mentorship, and continuous growth.

RS Kendle is a poet and creative practitioner from the northeast of Scotland. A winner of The Poetry Archive's WordView, and Best Of The Net nominee, their work has been featured in several anthologies and digital publications, including *Acropolis Journal*, *Azaráo Lit Journal*, *Clarion*, *Dust Poetry*, and *The Winged Moon*. Follow them on Instagram @rskendle.

Faiza Kiran is a writer, poet, and educator with a strong academic foundation in English Literature and Creative Writing. She holds an MA in Creative Writing and an MA in English Literature and is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Education. Her poetry has been published, and her short stories explore memory, identity, loss, and human resilience. A mother of three, Faiza draws inspiration from family life, teaching, and faith, weaving lived experience, compassion, and reflective insight into creative work rooted in empathy and hope, through poetry and prose that seek connection, healing, truth, and quiet transformation.

Kathy Lytle has been a practitioner and teacher of alternative and complimentary healing arts for 30 years. Her personal path has lead her to explore the fields of reflexology, aromatherapy, TCM, as well as healing through sound frequencies, meditation, breath work, and color/art therapy. As an artist, writer and meditation teacher, Kathy finds great joy in facilitating sessions that lead others to their own personal connections with themselves, with others, and with the Great Mother Goddess of this beautiful planet that we all share.

Loyrey is an artist and illustrator based in New York. Her art explores the mystical feminine as a symbol of inner divinity through archetypes and symbolic relationships. Through meditative ink lines, muted color washes, and organic textures, she translates inner myth and spiritual inquiry into dreamlike visual forms. Her work offers a serene, symbolic space for introspective souls seeking beauty, gentleness, and spiritual resonance amidst the chaos of the modern world.

Aline Martinian is a self-taught mixed media (acrylic and watercolor) artist depicting goddesses, witches, gothic, and skull art.

Nina Martucci is a middle aged writer who is healing through nature, spirit, presence, and poetry. She lives in Maryland with her beloved chihuahua, Duncan. They spend most of their time frolicking in the woods.

Kathryne McCracken LMT, CLT-LANA, is a life-long learner and traveler with an insatiable curiosity. Sensitive to the energy around her since childhood, she followed it as it took her from Oregon to fascinating destinations in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine. She ultimately found her place, Hilton Head Island, SC, and purpose, Massage Therapist and Reiki Master. She has a Graduate Certificate in Aging and Geriatric Practice from the University of Florida School of Medicine, where the focus of her research was the prevention of premature aging through bodywork, such as Myofascial and Lymphatic Therapies and Reiki.

Eagle Moon is a poet whose work explores rebirth, protection, and moments of quiet transformation. Their writing often follows a narrative arc, moving through collapse, care, and return, with spirituality grounded in everyday life. Eagle Moon is drawn to liminal spaces where the sacred briefly touches the ordinary, leaving behind warmth, humor, and lingering light. Their work centers clarity of feeling over abstraction, inviting readers into experiences that are both intimate and accessible.

Jon Raimon teaches writing in Ithaca, NY. His work explores grief, family, resistance, and all forms of love. He is part of Spring Writes, Ithaca's literary festival, and his work appeared in *Trampoline: A Journal of Poetry*, *The Turning Leaf*, *Book of Matches*, *Merganser Magazine*, *Quasar Review*, *Adirondack Center for Writing*, *Wilderness*, and will soon be featured in *The Bluebird Word* and *Dogwood Alchemy*.

Andrea Redmond is an artist whose work focuses on the Divine Feminine. She lives in Donegal but is originally from Prince Edward Island in Canada. Her work features on feminist pagan forums such as the *Girl God* publications and regularly in *Pagan Ireland Magazine*.

Amy Segerstrom is a retired counselor and former Coordinator of The Healing Place. She is a trained spiritual director and is certified in the MBTI (Myers Briggs Type Inventory). She is also a co-facilitator of MMM (Monday Morning Meditation), a free weekly zoom meditation group. Amy's poems have appeared in *Spilled Ink and Second Thoughts* and *Goodbye to Lonesome Valley* as well as *Volume One*, *Bramble Magazine*, *Barstow and Grand*, *Versé Virtual*, *Gypsy Cab*, and *Prometheus*. Amy is a resident of Mondovi, Wisconsin. Her work can be found on Instagram @amysegerstrom.

Merry Stanford has spent a lifetime pursuing an intimate relationship with the Spirit who animates her. She is a retired psychotherapist, an avid traveler, social justice advocate, and happy explorer of many spiritual traditions, which have included Earth-centered spiritualities, ecstatic contemplative spiritualities, universalism, Quakerism, Catholicism, shamanism, and yoga. Merry came of age during the era of Civil Rights and second-wave feminism. She is white, married to a kindhearted man with a lot of yin, and is a mother, mother-in-law, and granny to eleven incredible human beings. She is grateful to be an oddball.

Veronica Tucker is an emergency medicine and addiction medicine physician, mother of three, and lifelong New Englander. Her writing explores the intersections of medicine, motherhood, memory, and the human experience. A Pushcart Prize nominee, her work appears in ONE ART, *The Berlin Literary Review*, *Rust & Moth*, and elsewhere. Her chapbook *The House as Witness* is forthcoming from Quillkeepers Press. She lives in New Hampshire with her family, where she writes between shifts, long runs, and finely crafted matcha lattes. Find her at www.veronicatuckerwrites.com and on Instagram: [@veronicatuckerwrites](https://www.instagram.com/veronicatuckerwrites).

Robbi Wilson (Palnata7) is a Coast Salish member of the Tla'amin Nation and gratefully resides in the shared territories of the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish and Musqueam Peoples unceded territories. Robbi has supported many rural and urban Indigenous people and organizations on their wellness path. Robbi enjoys sharing her lived experience, stressing the importance of reconnecting with Mother Earth & Mother Nature. She has blended her Indigenous cultural practices with other holistic healing approaches. Robbi believes in the benefit of staying curious and finding ways to complement her Indigenous cultural ways of being. She supports others in their own empowerment.



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