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# COMMON SENTIENCE



# GODDESS

*Blessed Reunions with the Feminine Face  
of the Divine*

## ANODEA JUDITH

OBERON ZELL • SIMONE SENISIN • ANDREA SULAK • AMY STEPHENS  
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## ANODEA JUDITH



SACRED STORIES  
PUBLISHING

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# PART ONE

*Meeting the Goddess*

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*A religion without a Goddess is halfway to atheism.*

—DION FORTUNE



# OPENING THE WAY



Since the beginning of language, humans have told stories to explain the mysteries that surround us. When our lives were deeply embedded in nature, those stories were about the sun and the moon, the cycles of birth, life, and death, and the balance in all of life. They gave meaning to people's lives and provided a moral guide for their behavior. Through stories, humans found connection to each other and to something greater than themselves, as part of a deeply interconnected web of life.

As time progressed, science and technology eroded our connection to the natural world, and most of those stories drifted into the past. Rational explanations replaced the more intuitive and imaginal realms in which stories live. While humanity took a giant step forward with the advance of science and rationality, we lost something precious in the process. Myth represents the other leg upon which we stand. We cannot take the next step forward without guiding myths to give us meaning and direction. Nor can we move forward without a feminine face of the Divine to balance and partner with the masculine paradigm.

Science tells us what and how, but not why. It allows us to manipulate the world around us, bending life to our will. It reveals the tiniest of particles

and reaches to the far edges of the universe. But science does not tell us what makes these parts into a whole. It does not tell us what it means to be alive or why we are here. It's as if we were trying to understand our economic system by analyzing the ink on the dollar. Without myths to guide us, humanity is losing its way. An essential element of the sacred is lost.

Myths are not *true* stories, in the rational sense, yet they explore larger and deeper truths. They explain things on an archetypal level. Archetypes—from the Greek root *arkhe*, meaning first, and *typos*, to strike a blow (as in a blacksmith fashioning iron)—are the primary imprints of consciousness, in turn shaping culture and its values. Invisible, yet powerful forces behind our beliefs and behaviors, archetypes define who we are, both individually and collectively. But even more, they define who we *can* be.

The Goddess is an essential archetype at the heart of all existence. To learn about her is to explore, at an archetypal level, a necessary part of ourselves and a missing part of our world. Embracing the Goddess allows us to reclaim magic and mystery; to re-engage with enchantment, love, and beauty; to delight in imagination and creativity; and to ground ourselves once again in the sacred wholeness of nature. Through the Goddess, we can return from whence we came. Each of us goes home, not as a helpless child suckling on the mother's breast, but as a maturing adult, co-creating with the feminine face of the Divine. To return home is to come back down to Earth and reclaim our roots, at last integrating heaven and earth in a seamless, intelligent cosmology of a living universe.

To *heal* is to become *whole*, as these two words are from the same root. Our fractured civilization will never find its wholeness in a purely masculine paradigm, in a singular male godhead, or in the denial of what brings us joy, meaning, and connection. It is not that the masculine is evil or bad, for it has created many of the wonders we have today. It's given us our highways and railroads, hospitals and airports, computers, stereos, and cell phones. The

problem with the masculine paradigm is that it lacks balance when it has no feminine to dance with.

To conceive a new life requires both masculine and feminine energies. But it takes a woman to give birth to that life, and preferably two parents to raise a child. Without a Goddess alongside a God, we cannot create the Divine partnership necessary to conceive, give birth, and successfully parent a new world.

This book is a resource for finding the Goddess once again. In its pages you will find her feminine face peeking out at you through history and myth, in contemporary stories and personal experiences of women and men who have encountered her. You will get an overview of what the Goddess is all about—who she is in her diverse aspects as the Maiden, Mother, Crone, and Queen—and what she can do for your life and for our world. Simple practices will help you connect once again to the Goddess that has always been there—in her varied expressions from cultures around the world. As you find her within, you will also strengthen her presence in the world.

This book is about reclaiming the Goddess so she can return to our world. But it's not so much that she needs to return to us, but that we need to come back home to *her*. She has always been here. It is we who have strayed.

The masculine paradigm has taken us on a “hero’s journey,” a pattern outlined by Joseph Campbell and reflected in myths and stories all over the world. In this journey, we leave the ordinary world for the call of adventure. We meet mentors, face challenges, go through ordeals, and seek the reward of transformation. But the final step in the hero’s journey is the *return home*, bringing back the elixir of healing to an ailing community.

It is time, at last, to return *home* to the Goddess and drink deep of her elixir of healing, love, beauty, and compassion.

Are you ready to lift the veil to see a world that has been forgotten, yet has been under your nose all along? Are you ready to embrace the passion

of your life force, regain the full spectrum of possibilities, and help bring not only balance, but beauty and magic back to our world?

Then there's someone I can't wait to introduce you to!



# PART TWO

*Blessed Reunions with the  
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*The universe is made of stories, not of atoms.*

—MURIEL RUKEYSER

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## A WOMAN'S QUEST

Like water flowing through the crevices of my life, she came. First the activist, fiery and undaunted... ah, youth. I thought I was embracing her, blind to how I still denied her. And then, she came into a dream:

I stand at a fork in a river, my sister to my left. I start to walk along the right side of the river. Suddenly I stop and turn around, joining her wading through the left path. I look ahead and see a big wave approaching us. I'm terrified.

"It's okay," my sister says to me, "just go under it."

Her words confuse me.

"Wait, *I* say that, not *you!* I'm not afraid of the water—you are. I taught you to go under."

Under we go, I feel the power of the wave breaking above me, but I am safe with my sister, underwater.

A couple of weeks later, I discovered I was pregnant. *This is the wave.* The idea terrified me. *I don't want to be a mother! I told my husband I would never have a child. I'm a career woman.*

Yet, the wave passed, and I was at peace. I said yes.

I knew I'd changed paths, and still had no idea what the future might bring, but I knew the one I'd imagined was gone. She was coming.

Pregnancy prepared the way for her. It beat the resistance out of me, wringing me out. *How do I survive this?*

"Surrender," she whispered. And with my sister, who is the mother of two girls, by my side, I did.

When my precious daughter arrived, I saw how much I had denied the Goddess. I embraced the reactionary. I said no to her, the most fundamental emanation of a mother, because in my experience, the mother was powerless. I did not want to be powerless.

So, I tried hard to be the perfect mother, to dedicate myself entirely to my daughter's well-being. It backfired. I grew more and more tired and sick until I didn't have the energy to care for her. I was exhausted, there was no fight left in me.

And then *she* emerged, and I saw that the activist and the mother were one. The career woman and the mother were one. The leader and mother were one. There was no denying any part of her. Yet in the undercurrents of my subconscious, I felt the past, like seaweed wrapping itself around my legs, pulling me down. Shame and guilt revolted against her, against my love of her, my love of self.

And then, another wave. The yoga community that had been my home for five years—my second child, whom I had nurtured, and for whom I led the way—exploded. Our spiritual leader was exposed as a sexual predator who had abused his female disciples, his spiritual daughters... incest.

Her deep fire raged through me. My beloved Durga Ma, after whom I'd been named, rose to slay the demons. The foundation upon which this community had been built was a lie. Our hearts were broken as loss, betrayal, and grief overwhelmed us. And during it all, like a phoenix, once again, *she* rose from the ashes. This time she said, *no more!*



She lifted me up beyond the chaos, above the clouds, and gave me my clearest vision yet. We were not alone. This was happening all over the world. The patriarchal system that had denied her for thousands of years was crumbling. Corruption was being exposed and even the yoga tradition had not escaped its reach. Another veil dropped from my eyes.

And then... a miracle. That empty space in me—the longing for home, the aching in my heart for what had been lost so long ago that it was barely a memory—began to be filled. *She* came and she was grace, and she was unstoppable. Her Divine, feminine presence had flowed through secret underground passages for thousands of years. Now she emerged. I felt her rise in me, in my sisters, in my brothers, in the world.

We chose to dismantle what we had created when half-asleep. I found my way forward by going inward and choosing her as my guide. She led the way through uncharted waters, and as she had in the beginning of my journey, she brought a sister to walk by my side.

She was sitting in a car, waiting for me to open the yoga studio and start class. She opened her door and before I saw her face, I saw the book in her lap. It drew me. I walked toward her, my eyes never leaving the book until the words became visible: *The Unknown She*.

This was the beginning of my next chapter. As before, *mother* came as *sister*. I could not have imagined the territory we'd travel together, the mountains, valleys, caves, and underground tunnels we would be led to. Through it all, a deep trust awakened in us, more powerful than we had ever known. Over and over, we said *yes* to her. We learned to love her in each other, to recognize her in all women, and to share our newly awaked hearts with the world as sisters. We blended our communities, expanding and deepening our experience of sisterhood. We found deeply buried treasure that lifted us to new heights.

To this day, we continue our journey. Physical distance allows us to experience the power of our bond—which is not a bond, because there is no need for bonds when we are one. And we are.

Now I am an elder and *she* brings me her biggest gift. First, she strips me of everything: my husband, my home, my health, my possessions, my animal family. I'm familiar with this now, so I don't resist much. I ask her for help and a beautiful, powerful woman—another sister—opens her arms in welcome and offers me sanctuary. In this sacred place, I grieve, I rage, I dissolve. Another veil drops from my eyes as she shows me the illusions I've clung to and invites me to let go.

The winds of change are relentless, yet I come full circle to my sister's door, to her loving heart, to the safe place under the wave. It's here, with courage and through tears, that she speaks a truth I've refused to see. A shadow aspect of myself that's buried deep in my heart. *That's not me, I would never do that, I don't remember it!* Little by little, it comes to me. It's true, it's all true.

Can I love even this part of me? Can I forgive myself? Can I extend compassion and embrace myself? Can I make myself whole and, in so doing, finally embody her wholeness? Can I be a channel for her love, power, and wisdom, as I know I am meant to be, as we are all meant to be?

She insists, and I say, "Yes, please! Yes!" All other options melt away.

Awakened on a full moon night, energy coursed through me. A door opens and I step through to the other side. It almost overwhelms me: such love, such joy, such clarity! The remnants of the old are dissolved. There is no more separation, no imbalance, no fear, no anger, or resentment toward the masculine. No defenses, no shields, no swords. The mother and father are one.

Suddenly, the future is clear. I am free to live my destiny, and I don't resist. She illumines my consciousness and I know the Divine Mother and Divine Father have birthed their holy child, me, humanity. She exposed the lies and

illusions. She revealed the Divine truth. She fully awakens in me the knowing that love is the fabric of life and that we are each a unique expression of this love. Our nature is creative and Divine, and our purpose is to share it with the world—to shine forth!

Oh Mother, dear Mother, my life begins anew...

*Maria J. Garcia*



# PART THREE

*Practices for Coming Back Home  
to the Goddess*

*When I do not know who I am, I serve You.  
When I do know who I am, I am You.*

—RAMAYANA

# PRINCIPLES OF CONNECTION



Now that you have learned about the Goddess and read some of her stories, we turn to practices that can help bring her into your life. Through you, she lives in the world once again.

Just as the Goddess represents diversity, there are many paths to connect with her. There is no dogma, no one-true-right-and-only way. There is just cause and effect, which we learn by experiment. But all her practices are based on a few fundamental premises.

## SHE IS EARTH AND EVERYTHING ON IT

The plants, animals, and humans, the rocks, seas, and mountains, and yes, even the bustling cities—are the life, body, and breath of the Goddess.

Every part of this body, from the tiniest microbes to the distant galaxies, is interconnected and ruled by an underlying wholeness, just as our own bodies, made of trillions of cells and multiple organs, hold together as a single entity. Like fleas who don't know they're living on an elephant, we are too small to realize we live on a planet that is functioning as a living being. Gaea is a unity of which we are an intrinsic part.

## THIS LIVING BEING IS SENTIENT

Earth, as a living being, has a finely tuned intelligence honed from billions of years of evolution. She regulates the atmosphere and ocean salinity, and even the planet's surface temperature, if we don't interfere with it too much. She is aware of what we do, just as you are aware when someone squeezes your shoulders, or worse, cuts into your flesh. As a reactive intelligence, she responds with self-protective measures when parts of her body are threatened.

Just as we evolve, so does Gaea. And we, in turn, help to evolve the Goddess as we learn and grow, as we craft new stories and engage in her rituals and her celebrations. Planetary philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin spoke of the emergence of the *noosphere*, a field of consciousness encircling the globe, long before the Internet was created. You might say this noosphere is an evolution of consciousness, much as the cerebral cortex was an evolution that made the human brain from the mammalian brain. This is new in Earth's five billion years of evolution, and we are still learning how to use it wisely.

What this all means for practice is that your thoughts, your actions, your emotions, and your body are not separate from Gaea. Each of those components is influenced by the field you are in, and each goes out into that field of intelligence. Mind you, a single person is only one of eight billion human cells in a colossal super-organism, so it doesn't mean that the mere thought of world peace will bring it about in an instant. It takes a critical mass to make change—yet each piece influences the whole.

Just as your body reacts defensively to an invading organism or a painful insult, the body of the Goddess reacts as well. As we continue to operate under a masculine paradigm of unending progress, overpopulation, and domination of nature, the Goddess will react as needed to continue her eternal existence. She will react according to the laws of nature.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF SACRED RECIPROCITY

The Goddess, as nature, operates through a principle of reciprocity. Within our atmosphere is a constant exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide: plants give us oxygen to breathe, and animals breathe out carbon dioxide for the plants. Chemical exchanges within your body break down food; within the forest, mycelium breaks down fiber and creates nourishment for plants to grow.

This means that anything you do, anything you ask for, and anything you take must be balanced by giving something back. This is simply a law of nature. We give to the soil and in return it gives to us. We give to a friend, and that friend is more likely to be there in our time of need.

A secret to finding the Holy Grail, which symbolizes the lost body of the Goddess, is this: *The one who serves the grail (meaning the Goddess) will be served by her in return.*

But anything you serve can be your grail. If your grail is love, you will have love. If your grail is money, you will have money. If your grail is beauty, you will have beauty. What you sow, you will reap. If you serve the Goddess, she will serve you, and serve you well—though not always in the manner you might expect!



## MEET THE AUTHOR



Anodea Judith, Ph.D. is a globally recognized teacher and the author of several bestselling books on chakras, psychology, yoga, social change, and women’s leadership, which have been translated into 28 languages.

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Learn more at [anodeajudith.com](http://anodeajudith.com).