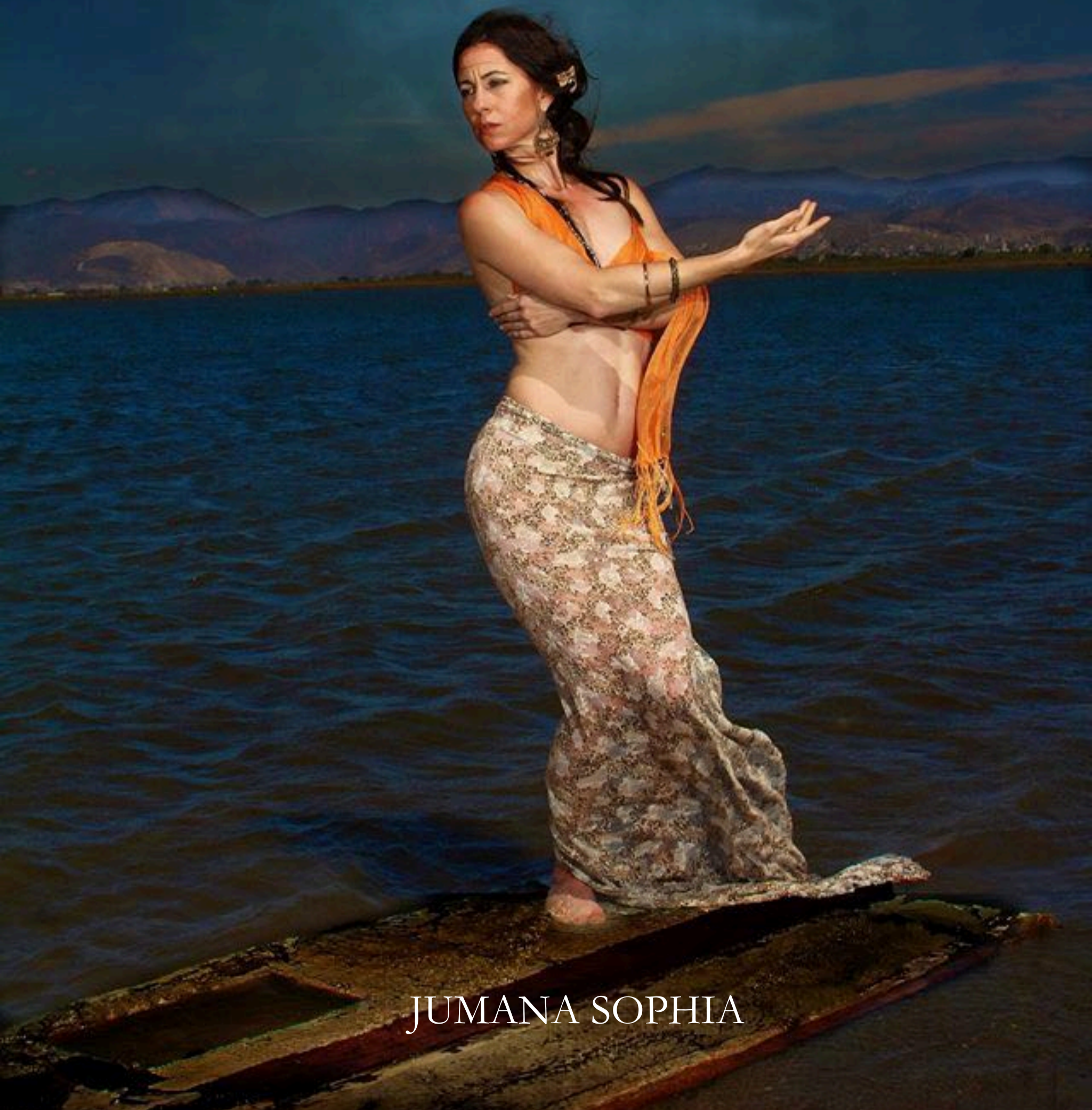


SACRED NEEDS
AND YOUR
SEXUAL ARCHETYPE



JUMANA SOPHIA

Introduction

SACRED NEEDS

We are in a time of powerful, vulnerable discovery and reclamation. While the cultural pendulum continues to swing between over-moralized repression and reckless promiscuity, many of us are longing for something deeper, something that can't be tamed or captured on any pendulum, by any culture.

In sexuality, in moments of true intimacy, we touch power, we touch beauty, exalted passion, love, yearning.....you could say we touch God. We certainly touch something True, something we long for in the deepest parts of our hearts. We also by turns walk the road of desolation, estrangement from ourselves, shame, and emotional agony when intimacies fall away through abandonment, isolation, or dysfunction.

Authentic female sexuality, in its most vibrant, free, elegant, and wild nature, doesn't exist on the pendulum. By its nature it doesn't just swing between opposites, acting and reacting. It's far too nuanced and alive for that. It is an experience that *unfolds from within a woman*, moment to moment, in a dynamic range of expression from the tender to the fierce, the subtle to the explicit.

For each of us to turn toward our sexuality as the mystery and miracle it really is, to heal and to thrive, we must be gentle - most cultures and religions have denied or denigrated sacred regard towards female sexuality for millenia. We are in the process of remembering something as natural and wise as the breath, but it won't be the overculture that assists us in that remembrance. We will have to look toward the experts.....ourselves. Our bodies, our wisdoms, our courageous hearts.

If you choose to invite your sexuality to become a natural, unfolding expression of your truest self, rather than the commodified, manipulated, performance driven thing that sex has become in the mainstream, you will embark on a journey that is touched by

mystery, that requires reverence for your own Womanhood, and a fiercely devoted self-advocacy. That's where this book and this course come in.

This book addresses the confluence of two things: archetypal sexuality and sacred need. To approach sexuality through an archetypal lens is to acknowledge that sexuality is something far more than a play of personalities, preferences, wounds, seductions, and romance. With an archetypal approach we look towards those potent moments when intimacy, or life, becomes exalted. When it truly, deeply moves us. Archetypes have a way of being both us, and more than us. When we touch this level of sexuality it becomes an expression of our deepest nature. It becomes authentic and untamed, nourishing to the soul and healing to the heart.

There are six archetypes of female sexuality explored in the pages ahead. The Priestess Lover, the Lover Queen, the Daughter of Aphrodite, the Virgin Lover, the Wild Lover, and the Shadow Lover. Each chapter goes more deeply into the gifts, challenges, and keys to thriving within each archetype. You will most likely resonate strongly with one or two of them (those are then your primary archetypes), but chances are you will relate to all six. They all move through all of us in different measure, in different seasons of life and relationships. Definitely make it a priority to read through all of them - they will each offer you a unique and important recovery of your feminine essence.

It is powerful and healing to simply know the archetypes within yourself and approach your sexuality with greater respect and understanding for what is most deeply true in you. But I encourage you to take it even further, into a claiming of your sacred needs.

Your sacred needs are those needs which actually arise from your deepest, most authentic feminine essence. They are the needs that lie at the heart of your most profound longings, the sometimes seemingly irrational agony you may experience if you feel neglected by, diminished by or disconnected from an intimate partner. They are also at the heart of the restlessness or listlessness you may feel in partnerships, that feeling of "not being met," and becoming increasingly hungry for that experience.

Sacred needs are also often the ones we ourselves most diminish or dismiss. If you don't know yourself well enough to claim your sacred needs, it becomes well nigh impossible for a lover to know and meet them, even an intuitive lover who would love nothing more than to delight and honor you.

Ultimately, here's the thing - **sacred needs won't rest until they're met**. They are meant to guide you to the full fruition of your experience as a woman, not just sexually, but in all of your life. For us, in this course, however, we're looking toward sacred needs as they express and come alive in the vulnerable, powerful, and extremely revealing dance of sexual intimacy.

When your sacred needs are met, by yourself and your chosen partner, you will be able to open doorways within yourself, in your body, in your pleasure, and in your heart that will otherwise remain closed. This course, and this exploration of the archetypes, is meant to support you in naming for yourself what your sacred needs truly are. They are common to many of us, but unique to each of us in the way they express, in the specific ways they want to be met.

As you read through the chapters and the archetypes, be listening for the voice within you that recognizes aspects of your own sacred needs in each of the descriptions. You'll feel it when the words touch on a sacred need for you. It will be a feeling of being seen, of being able to release pent up judgments of yourself and the way you express. Note these moments, and keep a journal near by to capture them in writing if you can.

When you step into true acceptance and deepening intimacy with the authentic way that the female sexual current moves through you, and the sacred needs that must be met in order for you to thrive, you open the way for your lovers to do the same. This is where emotional safety, soul satiety, and full spectrum pleasure in intimacy become not just a possibility but a long term reality. You deserve it, and the world deserves to know you in all that you are.



Chapter One

THE PRIESTESS LOVER

OVERVIEW

The Priestess Lover touches the sacred in lovemaking. As a Priestess Lover, lovemaking is a form of worship, even in its most explicitly erotic expressions. You have often touched states of ecstasy, soul-mate connections, you may even say experiences of "God." You have also often been absolutely devastated by the breaking apart or ending of these experiences. Your highest states of lovemaking are extraordinary and very much outside of the narrow definitions of what "sex" is. You often experience that a presence much bigger than just you or your lover is present. The challenge for you is to navigate the tension

between the beauty you experience and the reality of all the gritty, vulnerable complexity that sexual intimacy creates; your ability to see the soul (or the highest) in your lover, and the flawed reality of who your lover really is. Priestess Lovers often find themselves devastated and lost when they realize the lover they've been exalting and serving for so long is not at all who they perceived them to be.

GIFTS OF THE PRIESTESS LOVER

Your gifts as a lover are devotion, an ability to infuse sexuality with both ancient power and the sacred, and to see the soul, or the potential, in the ones you choose to love.

CHALLENGES OF THE PRIESTESS LOVER

There are three core challenges to this archetype of lover:

You open to much more than just your lover when making love, and this can get confusing or even devastating. You are opening to God or the sacred or the holy nature of woman when you make love. Your lover may or may not be able to access the state you access, and they may or may not be able to honor it the way it deserves. Many a priestess lover has emerged from a magnificent sexual connection that rocked her soul only to realize that her lover didn't actually share the experience, or simply is at a loss as to how to honor and really show up for sexuality that is so breathtaking. This can be devastating and deeply confusing. Remember - you are actually making love to your God when you take a lover. You can think of your lovers as chariots that God rides to meet you and make love to you, to open you, to catalyze you. The chariot may not always be aware of the power riding within it, but you can be, and you can put your worshipful nature where it belongs. At the feet of your God (or Love or your sense of the sacred) until or unless a lover proves themselves worthy of your unbridled devotion.

You exalt and hold reverence for life by your nature, and this gift for exaltation can give way to dangerous fantasies about your lovers if you are not careful. Many, many a priestess lover has experienced the absolute devastation and disorientation of realizing that the gorgeous being they've been pouring everything out for is actually narcissistic,

dishonest, unfaithful, abusive, irresponsible, addicted, uninterested.....you name it. It turns out that we priestess lovers hold a deep vow in our being to see and elevate the soul of others, their true nature, their potential. This is an unparalleled gift of healing in most cases, but it can be dangerous with a lover. If they have not yet recognized their own true nature and come to inhabit their own integrity, you will end up with a fractured sense of yourself and the relationship that can take some real time and care to recover from. You are not meant to simply serve, revere, and uphold your lover. You are meant to be met and held by the inner fire and strength of a lover who can stand in the face of power, surrender to it, and bow as deeply as you do.

Lovemaking is worship for you, naturally. Treat it that way. This does not mean elaborate ceremony or intense "intention setting" every time, or even that love making will always have a particular tone. Priestesses are full spectrum women who like their lovemaking in all ways - from the hot and primal to the sensitive and refined. To treat your lovemaking as worship is to simply remember that you really open deeply when you touch your erotic being, and this is truly a holy thing. We're way beyond the misguided demonization and dismissal of female sexuality that damaged our ancestresses for so many millennia. You are sacred ground and lovemaking is worship with the potential to bring direct connection to an experience of God/Love/Life that touches the heart of all things. So, you might simply light a candle, breathe together for a few moments or a while to really connect and drop in before making love, or sure yes you might love to create a full on ceremony to celebrate and really anchor your intentions for sharing each other. Whatever it is, let it be simple, let it even be as simple as an inner silent prayer, or an offering of gratitude for the opportunity to touch the sacred. When you honor your reverent nature, you will find yourself more present, more free, and far more emotionally safe.

KEYS TO THRIVING AS THE PRIESTESS LOVER

Three essential keys to thriving as this archetype of lover, and cultivating sexual intimacies that are emotionally safe, satisfying, and honoring for you are:

DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THE PRIESTESS AND THE WOMAN.

There is a way that women who have a healer or priestess archetype within them can over-identify with the archetype and lose touch with their own personal, simple human

woman essence. It might feel amazing for a while to be so identified with such a powerful and beautiful archetype, but it is far better and more sustainable to stay balanced. Choose when you will show up as priestess or healer, and when you will not. Choose consciously whether or not you are willing (and truly able) to show up in service at that level, or if it isn't what would actually nourish you. In our context here, what's important to consider is that your lover should love and care for the woman you are, in all your flaws and needs and idiosyncrasies, not just the priestess. Lovers who are enamored of the priestess or healer in you, who just love being in that abundant, wonderful presence, will often prove unable to hold all of you. Better that they love the woman you are first, then come to know and honor you as a priestess. It is effortless for you to touch and share the sacred, but most likely far more difficult for you to touch and receive and share true, vulnerable intimacy, as you are, in all that you are.

CARE FOR YOUR SACRED NATURE.

You can touch and embody extraordinary power, beauty and love. Know that for as powerful as you can feel at times, there will be an answering vulnerability. Always. You are opening, you are walking a rare and often forgotten sacred path. Learning to care for what you carry and what you are capable of is a lifelong discipline, and in order to fully thrive, you must commit to caring for your own sacred nature, in all that it asks, for all that it gives. You are sacred, not invincible. If you are a woman who naturally opens to the sacred, to exalted or highly open, even altered states, through lovemaking, then you are not simply a priestess lover. You are an embodiment of the priestess archetype, period, and it's showing up loud and clear in lovemaking because sexuality amplifies true nature. So, consider how you can care for the sacred presence that lives in you and moves through you, and devote yourself to that first, a lover second.

CHOOSE KNIGHTS AND KINGS (QUEENS), NOT PRINCES (PRINCESSES) AND PLAYERS.

Here's the truth: your ability to open to the sacred in lovemaking means that you have already opened to the capacity of female sexuality in a huge way. Though you will be tempted and often conditioned to believe that your lovers are the ones who "take you there" (and you will often enter massive despair around the loss of a lover until life sends you yet another beautiful soul to worship with). What actually "takes you there" is your own nature, is the capacity of female sexuality within you. It's time to grow out of the fantasy

that there is a lover/soulmate who is all you ever dreamed, saying all the right things, soooo dreamy, soooo special. Consider growing into the reality that a lover who can hold you, meet you, honor you, and stay steady in the face of your passionate, ancient power and love is what you really need. Where you'll really thrive. The poetry, the immediate soul connection, the wow connections.....maybe they'll become real, but don't rush in and fantasize them into reality. Let those epic moments evolve before you rush into sexual intimacy and end up bonded with someone who carries a beautiful soul but has't yet lived into it, and therefore will take you on a confusing, rollercoaster ride. Inside of a secure, loving, mature sexual intimacy you will be able to surrender and open to more and more of your own sacred nature, even if (and actually more likely if) it starts slow and steady and builds over time.



Chapter Two

DAUGHTER OF APHRODITE

OVERVIEW

As a Daughter of Aphrodite, one of the gifts you bring to sexual relationships (and all of life) is sensuality and abandon. Pleasure is not a luxury - it's lifeblood for you. You love to experience pleasure AND to give it. You tend to fall in love quickly and to naturally adore your lovers. You are a garden of delight, and you love to love. The trick is to choose wisely. Your nature is to adore and to bring pleasure, but when you turn your gift for adoration towards partners who are not worthy of it, it can lead you into heartbreak and devastation.

GIFTS OF APHRODITE'S DAUGHTER

Your gifts as a lover are passion (often unbridled), adoration, and a natural, luscious sensuality.

CHALLENGES OF APHRODITE'S DAUGHTER

There are three core challenges to this archetype of lover:

You love the state of adoration so very much that you may often find yourself adoring and giving everything for lovers who simply are not worthy, have not earned the privilege of receiving this level of devotion from you, or who don't have the capacity to truly value what it is you give. This can leave you invested in sexual relationships that are ultimately depleting and dissatisfying.

The act of loving, of taking a lover, of making love, is such a necessary and natural part of your expression as a woman, and such a core expression of what you most value in life, that you may find yourself weaving fantasies about who is in front of you, rather than seeing them for who they are. This can catch you in a trap of your own design.....ending up devastated or disillusioned when the truth of who your lover is finally dawns on you (their values, emotional maturity, what they're really available for, how trustworthy they are, or are not).

Sometimes you're misunderstood. Sensuality and sexuality are natural and exuberant aspects of your personal expression, but just because sexuality is easy and natural to you doesn't mean that it is meaningless, casual, or reckless. You are devotional and adoring in your sensuality and you feel deeply, you yearn for union and for real love, and you are very hurt by lovers who "dip into your well," enjoying the luscious fruits of your being, then just dip out, as if you haven't just shared a precious gift with them, one that deserves acknowledgment, gratitude, and respect. You are not necessarily a promiscuous person, though you may be perceived that way, and approached that way at times, or understood as a woman who regards sex as casual, emotionally neutral. This is not the

truth of your nature - making love is a form of celebration for you, an experience of adoration that opens your heart and is as vulnerable as it is delicious.

KEYS TO THRIVING AS APHRODITE'S DAUGHTER

Three essential keys to thriving as this archetype of lover, and cultivating sexual intimacies that are emotionally safe, satisfying, and honoring for you are:

SLOW DOWN.

This won't be natural at first necessarily. When the spark is there, and the yum starts flowing, your inclination is usually to abandon yourself to it. It's just so good! But.....if you can slow your roll, you can take care of your needs for emotional safety as well as your need to give way to the lusciousness of life. A good way to do this, for a woman like you who thrives on pleasure and the beautiful romance of intimacy, is to slow things down not as a way of going stagnant, but as a way of savoring, luxuriating in the unfolding sensuality of the connection. Give it time to show itself for what it is before you open the entire treasure house of your being, your body, your adoration for someone else. Let them prove to you, yes prove to you, that they really value what you give, before you just pour it all out. This will protect you from the extreme swings between ecstasy and devastation that are often the habit of this archetype, and lead you into loverships that are more secure, stable, and ultimately far more pleasurable, far more passionate.

CHOOSE WISELY.

See if you can tolerate the burn of a good hard look at your own tendency to fantasize your lovers into something they are not, in order to meet your own needs for romance, connection, and love. You can only choose wisely if you allow the person in front of you to be who they are, in all of the gorgeous potential that you see, and in all of the possible flaws and deal-breaking aspects of character that may be present in them. Is this initial connection, the initial chemistry, however epic, something that they and you can live into, or is it just a passing moment that should be celebrated but then released for the momentary grace that it was? Is it really that amazing to be someone's secret succulent

lover, while they're willing to lie to their wife and keep you held in the background of their lives? Is the sentimentality of this sweet-eyed, romantic, heavenly lover actually backed up by action? Poetry of love and adoration is epic, but it's not enough to take you fully into your capacity for pleasure and love. Sentimentality needs to be backed up by choices, actions, the solid evidence that your lover doesn't just talk about it - they live it. Just like you.

KEEP YOUR CUP FULL.

Sensuality, love making, romance, the luscious beauty of yearning and being adored, and adoring.....these are not just blessings to be grateful for. For you, these are necessary expressions of your soul and your female nature. Love is your art form, and you are genius at it. You will wither and dry up if you do not have enough passion, abandon, and connection to the juice of life. This can make it so that, if you are not filling your own cup on a regular basis, a desperation will take root in you, and will lead you into sexual intimacies that are decidedly a compromise, or even disastrous. Know how you keep your own cup full, how you keep your sensual energy moving and alive in you, and DO THOSE THINGS with the same level of devotion and adoration you tend to pour into a relationship. Dance, massage, art, communion with nature, travel, deep feminine practices that cultivate your inner fire, singing, even prayer. You need to touch rapture and the sensual beauty of life on a regular basis, but it does not need to be with a lover in order to be truly fulfilling. Learning this, living this, will free you to choose lovers that can fully meet you, open you, and care for you, rather than those lovers that are willing to enjoy you, but not capable of showing up for the care and reciprocity that make you truly thrive.



Chapter Three

THE LOVER QUEEN

OVERVIEW

The Lover Queen carries herself with dignity and places a high value on honor. As a Lover Queen, who you choose to share your sexuality with very much depends on whether their values align with yours, whether or not you respect who they are in the world, and if you feel cherished by them. You sure do love chivalry in all its forms. Disrespect, indifference, and failure to uphold your values are absolute deal breakers. You embody and strive for empowerment as a woman and as a sexual being. Much of that empowerment has been hard won. The challenge for you is two fold. Lover Queens out of balance will either criticize and push love away because nothing is ever quite good enough, or they will over extend themselves, making up for what a partner lacks in empowerment with their own personal power, emotional maturity, even money.

GIFTS OF THE LOVER QUEEN

Your gifts as a lover are poise, generosity, elegance, mutual empowerment, and a sexuality that both offers and thrives on the kind of honor that makes both you and your lover step into the extraordinary.

CHALLENGES OF THE LOVER QUEEN

There are three core challenges to this archetype of lover:

You can overgive to the point of extreme depletion and imbalance. You have realized and embodied much of your own dignity, prosperity (financial or otherwise), and abundance. You will often want to share this generosity, this abundance, with your lover. It's natural. But many Lover Queens find themselves in the strange and unhappy situation of partnering with a lover in a more parental, caretaking role, than in a relationship of mutual respect and empowerment. Many a Queen has had to reckon with significant deficits in the balance of a sexual relationship, particularly financially, but energetically, emotionally, and logistically as well. Be cautious of your unconscious need to be needed, and your tendency to mother your lovers, rather than to allow them to step into their own empowerment and self-responsibility.

You can be far more unconsciously entitled than you realize. The true dignity of a Queen is natural and needs no pampering. The embodiment of the Queen archetype in its highest form is an embodiment of fullness, generosity, and wisdom. She is power incarnate, no validation necessary. Yes you will have non-negotiables, most of them related to being treated with respect and dignity, but remember.....it's the princess who must be special, who must be adored and pampered. She hasn't yet claimed her power fully, and realized that generosity of spirit is the mature expression of true nobility. Invite, don't demand. Sit in your own fullness and dignity and from that place invite what you would like to receive. Demanding it, even if your lover actually wants to give you what you want, will almost always push it further away, creating resentment rather than true reciprocity and the kind of sweet, true intimacy you can trust.

You can be intimidating. And you might actually love that about yourself. Empowerment is hard won, and self-advocacy is nothing you should ever abandon. And yet.....the deep feminine heart yearns for softening, for surrender, for the kind of protection around your vulnerabilities that a noble lover can provide. If you let them. There is more than a chance that your radiance, your competence, your abundance of being, your personal dignity is all actually a little or a lot intimidating to some lovers. It's possible they'll feel intimidated and realize they don't actually have what it takes to meet you, and in that case - remember challenge #1 and don't become their caregiver, or try to escort them into their own power. AND, if you find a lover who is inspired and turned on, and ready for a truly empowered, noble kind of loving, please consider softening into them. They will be flawed, just like you. They will need to grow, just like you. The biggest challenge you may face is the challenge to actually soften and surrender to noble love when it arrives, instead of remaining in the upright, sometimes hardened and protected/shielded stance that many Queens have had to assume in order to survive.

KEYS TO THRIVING AS A LOVER QUEEN

Three essential keys to thriving as this archetype of lover, and cultivating sexual intimacies that are emotionally safe, satisfying, and honoring for you are:

BALANCE YOUR GENEROSITY WITH DISCERNMENT.

You can make things happen, and you are likely living a life that is financially, emotionally, and/or spiritually reflecting your commitment to excellence, prosperity, integrity and generosity. Your impulse to serve others, to uphold the courage and the greater potential of others, and to give of the gifts you've been given is a trustworthy impulse. Queens love to serve and cherish their realms. HOWEVER...in a sexually intimate relationship, you must maintain balance, and resist the impulse to caretake, to simply luxuriate in your capacity to give. Your relationship to your lover must remain balanced, must remain reciprocal, or it will create deficits in you that can take years to repair. True generosity will come from the heart, but in order to be true and healthy for you it needs to be balanced with the discernment that arises from deeper inside of you. Notice what it feels like when you are reaching too far towards a lover, taking on too much, or beginning to deplete the reservoir of essential abundance that must always remain full in you, and for you only.

FOCUS ON APPRECIATION FIRST AND ALWAYS.

You have a gift for praise, and because of your natural dignity and integrity, it really means something to your lover to be praised by you. I know you want a lover to rise up with you and sometimes you might feel frustrated (and just a little entitled) when things aren't quite the way you want them, but the best way to invite that to happen is to praise, honestly and authentically, to speak your gratitude for things big and small, and to lift up your lover in your eyes and their own. Set yourself the challenge of really noticing all that your lover gives and does for you, and then speaking to it. Notice how often you are frustrated or dissatisfied and consider shifting your own tone. Shifts are far more likely to happen if you let your lover know for instance, that you LOVE it when they turn toward you with their full attention, it's such a turn on, rather than letting them know that it really doesn't work for you when they're checked out and you need them to show up, now, and in just the right way. Remember, you amazing, noble thing - invitation and inspiration evoke the best in others, but demands and criticism can crush their secret tender places and shut them down.

BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR VALUES AND MAKE SURE THEY'RE SHARED BY YOUR LOVER BEFORE YOU GET INTIMATE.

Lovers are often inspired by you, how you live, how you hold yourself, how you hold your values. They may be so inspired that they say all the right things, and mean them, because yes, truly they want to be the most noble, badass version of themselves and you challenge them to rise up. But the kind of integrity, courage of heart, and emotional maturity that your being needs in order to thrive is not sentimental. It takes time and life experience and commitment to become a person of depth, maturity, and personal power. So keep your eyes open - your ears might hear all the right words, but you need to see action that is in alignment with those words before you go anywhere near deep sexual intimacy. Once you've entered sexual intimacy you will be viscerally and emotionally bonded in ways that will make it far more difficult to maintain clarity and really see whether or not this lover is what they say they are, or appear to be. They need to embody and act according to the values they profess, not just be able to make claims and gestures toward them.



Chapter Four

THE VIRGIN LOVER

OVERVIEW

The Virgin Lover is often misunderstood, especially by herself. As a Virgin Lover, your erotic nature is often expressed in ways that are not explicitly sexual. You have a refined sense of pleasure and connection, and you neither need nor always desire sex. You thrive on beauty, purity, and the eroticism of connections that are soul to soul, mind to mind, heart to heart, not just body to body. The challenge for you is to honor that "the erotic" is

not at all only explicitly sexual. The erotic is what opens you, what you love, what brings you into authentic connection with a lover.

GIFTS OF THE VIRGIN LOVER

Your gifts as a lover are refined passions, a full spectrum intimate companionship, and an innate knowing of the sublime and exquisite, as well as the luxury of contentment.

CHALLENGES OF THE VIRGIN LOVER

There are three core challenges to this archetype of lover:

Most definitions and mainstream expressions of "sexuality" are actually a turn off to you. Your eroticism is refined and full spectrum, and naturally extends far beyond the bedroom. What moves you in intimacy is connection, soul to soul, mind to mind, heart to heart, not just body to body. When just the body is involved in sexuality, you are likely to be turned off and uninterested. This can lead you to shut down your own sense of the erotic, believing that perhaps you aren't even really an erotic creature. This is a misunderstanding of your nature, and can create a tragic fracture in your being, an unnecessary distance from your own sexual, erotic impulses.

You have the capacity to experience the erotic not just outside of explicit sexuality, but outside of relationship entirely. The contentment, the pleasure, the sweetness, and simplicity that you can experience in times of solitude, reflection, or quietude are an incredible gift. These are ways that you draw nourishment and life force directly from the refined and simple heart of life, and they bring great contentment and peace. You thrive on purity, and there is a great sensitivity in your being. The challenge of this can be a tendency to shy away from the more gritty, more complex, but also more passionate and more dynamic terrain of intimate relationship. Remember that a sexual relationship is one that cultivates eroticism in your life, and that what is erotic is simply that which opens you, touches you, fills you, moves you, brings you to life. It is up to you to invite lovers into a full spectrum and refined exploration of sexuality and intimate connection. Purity and sensitivity is a gift you bring to the erotic, not a departure from the erotic.

You may confuse "virginal" and pure with stagnant, boring, asexual, or somehow lacking in the more wildly expressive sexuality you see around you. And sometimes, especially by immature or highly sex-focused lovers, you are misunderstood in that way.

Let your definition of a "sexual" relationship expand to be the full definition of an erotic relationship, and claim the very sublime, loving beauty and passion that purity and contentment can create between two people.

KEYS TO THRIVING AS THE VIRGIN LOVER

Three essential keys to thriving as this archetype of lover, and cultivating sexual intimacies that are emotionally safe, satisfying, and honoring for you are:

RECLAIM THE EROTIC.

You are an erotic creature. We all are. It's just a matter of whether or not we are willing to acknowledge our own unique language of loving and intimacy. If you have come to see yourself as asexual or shut down, make a decision to shed those misunderstandings and reclaim your erotic nature. It's a core part of you that will inform your whole life. The world and cultural conditioning around sexuality shuts us all down in various ways. For you, the shut down is likely to result in you feeling cut off from your own sexuality because the standard "turn ons" don't actually move you. You are a sexual creature, just one with refined sensitivities and needs for the exquisite - a slow, soft touch, sensitive handling, and sexual maturity. You may not have been met yet in the ways that actually open you, but you will be if you claim for yourself the highly erotic and compelling nature of your sexuality.

RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO FAKE IT.

Faking pleasure, faking interest, faking arousal. All of these will cut you off further from the discovery of your authentic sexuality, and create inconsistencies that will wear away your trust in your own choices, your self-respect, and your ability to touch the truly erotic. If you're not turned on, let that be. There's no reason you should be. There are no shoulds. Yes, it is up to you to reclaim your erotic nature so that you have it to offer to a lover, but it

is up to them, to the two of you, to create an intimacy that opens both of you authentically. Your lover won't be the standard sexual partner. They will be a special kind of being, and if you resist the temptation to fake it, you'll make it much more clear when the person in front of you is that being, or isn't.

BRING REFINED SENSIBILITIES TO YOUR LOVEMAKING.

Go ahead and give yourself 100%, unconditional permission to reject all expressions of the sexual that don't actually turn you on. There are no "shoulds" in the realm of female sexuality, so dismiss the inundation of cultural conditioning around what a "sexy" or erotic woman looks like, acts like, feels like. If it turns you on (aka opens your heart, relaxes your body, inspires you, softens you) to read poetry with your lover for hours in bed, with some tea, cookies, the cat and warm blankets, then lean into that. Let lovemaking be all that it is outside of the explicitly sexual, and then be courageous and follow the impulse to more explicitly sexual experience with another when it feels like a natural next step in the connection you've already established. Quality, not quantity. One night of explicitly sexual lovemaking that you are actually open to and comfortable with is far superior to dozens of nights you just tolerate. Bring what's erotic to you to the bedroom, and to your relationships.



Chapter Five

THE WILD LOVER

OVERVIEW

The Wild Lover thrives on the natural, the free, the untamed and undomesticated. "Wild" in this case doesn't refer to getting wasted and dancing on tables. Wild for the Wild Lover is a natural state, an untamed state, a state of freedom. As a Wild Lover you are drawn to sexual relationships in which you feel natural and free, where sexuality is a natural and healthy part of your togetherness, and where nature is very much a part of your erotic life. The challenge for the Wild Lover is to understand and respect the ways in which sexuality is not always simple and free. It is important for your wellbeing to choose lovers that are not just natural and free, but also wise and emotionally mature enough to really care for you.

GIFTS OF THE WILD LOVER

Your gifts as a lover are a natural, uncomplicated sensuality, often informed by your connection to nature, a sweetness and lightness of being, and a sense of expanse and adventure.

CHALLENGES OF THE WILD LOVER

There are three core challenges to this archetype of lover:

You can tend to expect sexuality to be less complicated than it actually is.

You are often drawn to lovers who can meet you in your sense of the untamed, natural and free, but who do not have the maturity to actually honor the full spectrum of sexual vulnerability, and who may lack the capacity to be honest, to know themselves well enough to truly partner you in a good way.

You can develop a sadness of heart, a listlessness or strange emptiness when your needs for natural eroticism are not met.

KEYS TO THRIVING AS THE WILD LOVER

Three essential keys to thriving as this archetype of lover, and cultivating sexual intimacies that are emotionally safe, satisfying, and honoring for you are:

ALWAYS MAINTAIN YOUR PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THE WILD.

This means regardless of whether or not you have a lover, it's important that you cultivate time in nature, time where you feel untamed and undomesticated alone, or possibly with other women. There is something you receive from touching into your own

innate wildness, alone, that you will always need, and that will keep you centered and connected to your own essence in a way that will fortify your heart.

REMEMBER THAT THE WILD HAS A THOUSAND FACES.

Your untamed nature and natural sensuality will need to be as truly free as the wild thing that you are. This does not equate to having no responsibilities, being able to do or to have whatever you want whenever you want it. It also doesn't equate to the standard and very domesticated version of a sexually "wild woman" who is essentially just reckless and often emotionally out of control. You have the capacity to develop an extraordinary intimacy with yourself, and all the aspects of wild feminine that live in you. Raw power, stillness, elegance, harmony, quietude, exuberance.....there are so many dynamics to the woman that is you. You are aligned towards authenticity, so although it may bring you into conflict or differences with the culture or standard beliefs around you, you must cultivate your authenticity of being in order to feel peace inside. To bring the fullness of your untamed nature to your erotic life is to carve out time and place to fully explore what your natural being really feels like, what she is capable of and drawn to, outside of all cultural conditioning. And then to create your lifestyle around that deep inner knowing.

SEEK EMOTIONAL MATURITY.

In both your lovers and yourself. Yes, sexuality is as natural as breathing. You have an innate lack of dogma and conditioning around sexuality that is a gorgeous aspect of your untamed spirit. It's a gift. And.....you may find yourself, or your lovers, in resistance to (or incapable of facing) the more complicated, vulnerable, and sensitive terrain that is also a natural part of sexuality. Sexuality is natural, yes. It's also vastly more powerful and vulnerable than most of us realize. In order to fully care for your spirit, your heart, and your body, you will need to turn toward the aspects of your sexuality that are confusing to you, and seek greater understanding. Acknowledge and honor the way that your eroticism, emotions, raw sexual power, and deep vulnerabilities all weave together in sexual intimacy. And seek out lovers who can meet and celebrate the untamed within you, but who also have the wisdom and inner strength to meet the complex or vulnerable when it arises, rather than sweeping it under the rug or running away.



Chapter Six

THE SHADOW LOVER

OVERVIEW

The Shadow Lover is a powerful being, comfortable in the chaos, conflict, passion and dynamism of transformative sexual relationships. As a Shadow Lover, you often find yourself in relationships that are passionate, but turbulent. You may have experienced one or more relationships that were marred by emotional abuse, addiction, and power struggles. You grow through relationship, and you expect your partners to do the same. You thrive on excitement, emotional fire, and deep feeling. Your challenge is to choose and cultivate a sexual relationship that offers passion without so much chaos. You can have the depth and fire and dynamism without all the repetitive conflict, all the push and pull, all the emotional dynamics that ultimately leave you sad, alone, and stuck.

GIFTS OF THE SHADOW LOVER

Your gifts as a lover are passion, dynamism, courage to face the hard things, and a fire for life and connection that burns bright, as well as comfort (even a draw) towards the more watery, shadowy emotional depths. You are committed to and capable of the kind of transformation, honesty, and staying power that are often part of nurturing true intimacy, with all of the vulnerability and growth that it evokes.

CHALLENGES OF THE SHADOW LOVER

There are three core challenges to this archetype of lover:

You need your lover to embrace transformation and growth, otherwise you will lose interest and stagnate. This is just the truth. You must have depth and you love the growing edge. But you might miss an important opportunity for intimacy and mutual respect if you don't respect and allow for your lover's way of transformation to be as valid as your own. You tend to grow in a fiery, dynamic way, possibly pursuing healing disciplines, workshops, and other intensive, focused avenues of growth. Your lover may or may not share that particular way of being with you. They may grow in ways that are more stable, more quiet, more internal, possibly less articulate than you, but true just the same. Be aware that your need for shared growth and transformation may get hijacked by your ideas about how that needs to look, and you may miss a connection that can actually grow with you, instead of combusting or drowning in too deep waters.

You may resist the nourishment of contentment, and create trouble where there is none. Here is your invitation.....can you imagine passion without chaos? Endless transformation, emotional upheaval, and the push and pull of a turbulent relationship is not sustainable. There is a such thing as an intimate relationship that is both secure, committed, stable AND erotically exciting, full of life, and yes, emotionally safe. Shadow lover, what if you could have a sexual relationship that is an oasis, a garden, rather than a navigation of power dynamics and inner demons? Growth can happen in many ways, and

sustainable, ever-growing passion must break free of emotional chaos in order to reach the heights and depths you are so beautifully capable of and deeply longing for.

You may find yourself in repetitive patterns of abuse, negligence, or addiction in relationship. There is a very tricky line between committing to the growth and the inevitable challenges of intimacy, and finding yourself bonded to a lover who is actually not yet stable or healed enough to responsibly and safely handle their own shadows, rages, inner fractures, and unconscious motivations toward harm, of themselves or others. It's nothing to be ashamed about - sexual intimacy is by its nature extremely emotionally and viscerally bonding, often regardless of whether or not the lover you're with is worthy and safe for such bonding. You may need to take some time, clear your heart and body from the impacts of these patterns, and re-establish yourself as an advocate and trustworthy protector of your own wellbeing.

KEYS TO THRIVING AS A SHADOW LOVER

Three essential keys to thriving as this archetype of lover, and cultivating sexual intimacies that are emotionally safe, satisfying, and honoring for you are:

DON'T SUFFOCATE OR OVERMANAGE THE TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESS OF INTIMACY.

The depletion that comes from over-processing and essentially drowning in emotionally complex shadow realms is real. Growth, intimacy and transformation take time. They need space, they need peace, they need joy, nourishment and comfort. YOU need all these things, especially as a deep feeler. Notice any tendencies you have to fixate on "problems" and then define your whole life or relationship based on them. One of the shadows of the shadow lover, and most women in general, is that they tend to be secretly or not so secretly extremely hard on themselves. We are human, flawed, creatures.

Sometimes, or often, see if you can just let it be, and let yourself turn toward whatever of the Good you know, whatever nourishes your wild, tender being.

GET AND KEEP TRUSTWORTHY SUPPORT AROUND YOU AND YOUR INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS.

When you meet big growth edges in intimacy, or challenges, it is extremely common to end up polarized and in a power struggle. Counsel that you both trust who can offer a neutral, third party reflection of what's going on between you is absolutely necessary. If you can find and determine who/where your support is before you begin sexual intimacy, that much the better. Your shadows may be both less intense than you think in some ways, more hidden to you than you think in others. A trustworthy intimate relationship is one of the most potent and potentially healing places to walk your own shadow lands, and bring love to the tender, passionate parts of you. Gathering counsel that you trust to guide the two of you through any difficulties or break downs in communication, and back to your love for each other is one of the most powerful ways to honor the relationship and help your intimacy thrive.

BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT IS GROWTH OR "SHADOW WORK" AND WHAT IS ACTUALLY ABUSE.

This is not always at all as simple as it might sound, especially when you're in the midst of a difficult dynamic. Honor yourself by taking the time to reflect on previous intimacies and the ways in which challenge may have crossed the line into abuse and truly unsafe situations, emotionally, physically, or mentally. How did you know? How did it feel? How did you convince yourself that things were ok, even though they weren't? This is a powerful and crucial time of self-care to prioritize. You will naturally evoke depth through sexual intimacy, and you have the staying power, the courage, to create a remarkable relationship with the right lover. Let's just make sure that you're sharing all the amazingness that you are with someone who is truly worthy of it, who can truly walk beside you through the joys and the pain.



Conclusion

KNOW THYSELF

I invite you to hold one truth very close as you move forward with whatever insights you've gleaned from this reading. That truth is:

All intimacy begins with you.

So much energy and attention is diverted to lovers, the culture, the "patriarchy," religion, and how all those things do or do not meet and honor Woman. Such understandings are useful to a point, but they can rapidly become endless, disempowering diversions. Don't

underestimate what can happen when you turn toward yourself and focus on untangling *your own* resistances, misunderstandings, or disregard of your sexual nature. With devoted, sacred self-regard, you can change not only your relationships, but your entire world, from the inside out. You don't have to solve all the things. You can simply draw close to your own fire and tend it until it burns bright, clear, and true.

If you choose to bring insights from this work to your partners, especially, I would strongly encourage you to stick with three principles:

1. Take care with your timing and your choice of context. Know that if you share about these sensitive parts of yourself, you may not be received in the way you desire, and it might hurt. It's a risk worth taking, but it's also very much worth waiting for a time when there is connection, time, space, and ease between you and your partner.
2. Keep in mind that much of what you might need to communicate will be done more truthfully and more simply without words. Through gesture, touch, behavior. Through modeling. Be what it is you want to receive. If you desire more sensitive touch, consider giving it. And just as important, acknowledge ALL the big and small ways your partner meets you, pleases you, opens you. It will do you both good.
3. Invite, don't demand, change. Demands invariably push away the very things that they are demanding. Invite with an open palm, and then give time and space for that invitation to percolate in your partner so that it can come back to you as an authentic offering.

And remember that for all of the emotional complexity that arises, true intimacy is ultimately simple. Be present, be honest, be honoring. Be kind. It will unfold from there.

I hope this inspires you to commit to being the lover that you are in all ways, not just in the bedroom. This is your art form, your life's thriving, your soul song. Allowing yourself to be all that you are, to make love to life as you do, all the time, will alleviate the desperation and entitlement that can sour intimacies and life itself.

You may have companions and catalytic lovers on your journey to know the full range of yourself as a sexual creature, as a woman incarnate, but ultimately sacred regard must find its home in you, first and always. You are, actually, a miracle. A unique and intoxicating

symphony of the archetypal and the mundane, the exotic and the comforting. Use these archetypes as inspiration, but remember you can never tame or fully describe the mystery of female sexuality. What is truly alive in you will resist capture in all ways, even your own.

Journey well, all you beautiful love artists!