The Queen's Path

the archetypal journey for women

BOOK PROPOSAL

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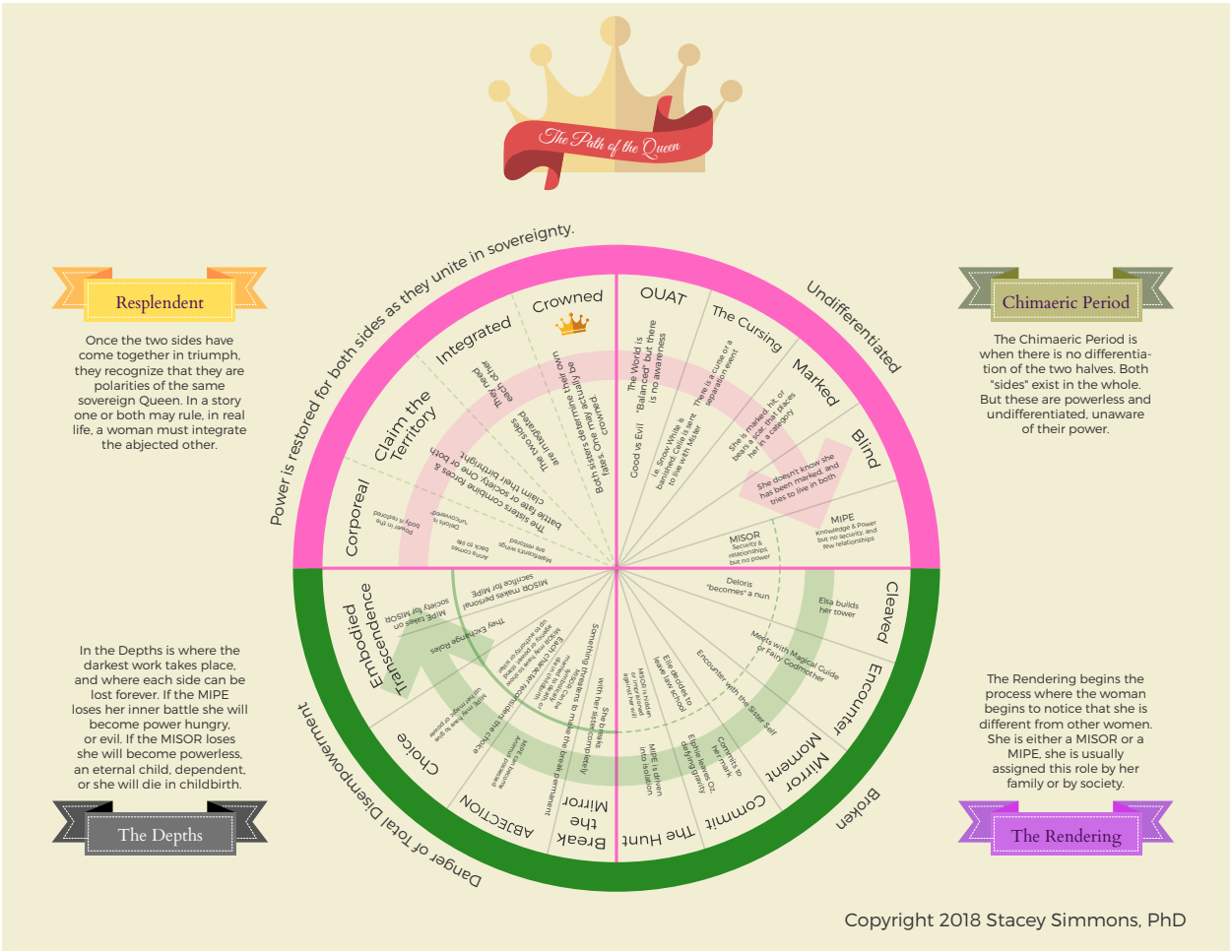
Every woman is a divided woman.



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THE QUEEN'S PATH:
the archetypal journey for women

How come no one ever asks *Clark Kent* whether fighting for "truth, justice, and the American way" will get in the way of having children? Why doesn't Alfred snarkily tell *Batman* that he shouldn't have that donut before a night of vigilante justice? How is it that no one asks *Luke Skywalker* if he's worried that wielding the power of the Force will make him too woo-woo to find a serious wife?

Because they are heroes…not women.

Overview

In 1949, Sarah Lawrence College professor, Joseph Campbell published a book entitled, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. The book became a tome of our western literary and psychological imagination. Chronicling the role of the hero as the singular representative of a monomyth of the human condition, Joseph Campbell's work has resonated for more than fifty years to give Westerners a cultural touchstone that has unified film, literature, psychology, and more. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* has influenced everyone from George Lucas to Oprah Winfrey, inspiring people to think mythologically about our place in the world. *The Hero's Journey* has been adopted by the authors of film, television, novels, comic books, and every means of modern storytelling. It has been examined psychologically, and employed as a means to challenge ourselves to truly consider the paths for men and women that can become transformative.

However, there has been a fundamental problem with the myth of the hero. It was written primarily for men. The heroes journey embraces a culturally acceptable vision of ideal manhood: active, brave, provider, strong, virile. The heroine's ideals may be similar, but they don't align with the limiting "ideals" of womanly virtue: demure, caring, domestic, beautiful, passive. I argue that our ancestors separated the archetypes of women, into two halves. In the divide, culture accepted the passive form of female, and exiled the active form. Women find ourselves *divided*, split from an early age, with only two options available to us. This shows up archetypal in story after story. A Divided Woman torn apart by circumstances, falling into one category. She battles the Divide until it subsumes her, and if she is lucky, she can battle this internalized force, transcend it, and become whole.

The representative of women throughout mythology and history has been of a divided person, split between an innocent ingénue and a magical other. The purpose of this book is to explore these portrayals and offer a blueprint for wholeness that ultimately embraces both sides of the divided woman. The book examines the reunification happening now in contemporary society with new characters in the collective that illustrate this reunited woman. She has sovereignty over herself, and agency in her own life. She is a Queen.

Unique Selling Position

When readers in the target market purchase and read *THE QUEEN'S PATH*, they will:

- Understand the history of the "divided woman" through mythology, history, and sacred literature ***and*** her influence on individual women's lives.
- Be able to identify the "side" of the divided woman that an individual woman most identifies with, and whether or not she had a choice in that track.

- Learn ways to develop both sides of the divided woman and help her build strengths that can be unified to help her achieve wholeness and sovereignty.
- This book can also be used by writers to help develop women characters and powerful women-driven stories.

The ideal reader comes away having new tools to balance that aspect of her sovereignty with awareness, able to define the boundaries of her own sovereign realm accordingly.

The goal of *THE QUEEN'S PATH*, is to offer women (and writers):

- Deeper *internal* relationships- with self, and her individual history
- Deeper relationships to family, friends, and other women
- The opportunity to see themselves and other women as ***unbroken*** and whole
- Provide a history and model of the psychic rendering of the primordial woman into two roles: the MIPE, and the MISOR.
- A story model for developing a narrative of one's life, a lens through which to identify significant life events, traumas, and desires.
- Development of their own personal values based on the idea of Self-Sovereignty
- A model for examining women's roles in film, sacred literature, mythology, and more.

Women have our own archetypal journey. For decades we have been encouraged to go on The Hero's Journey, or a Heroine's Journey, but for many women this feels false. Where is the part of the journey where the hero is humiliated for bleeding through her clothes just as the quest is about to begin? What about the part where the hero has to work multiple jobs to make up the difference for a husband who left her with three children? Where is the part in the hero's journey where the hero either acquiesces to sexual advances or risks her career to stand against them? The women's archetypal journey is NOT *about* these things, they are NOT her journey. But the

Hero's Journey presumes these pressures don't exist. The hero's journey is for men… because it doesn't include the bonds of patriarchy and how those pressures shape the feminine psyche.

What has emerged instead is a different archetypal journey, one that has been codified over thousands of years of patriarchy. Every woman I've talked to about this experience first scoffs at this, as you might be doing right now. You might be thinking, "Bullshit, women are capable of anything a man can do." And you're right. I'm not saying women aren't capable, I'm saying that the psychic structures that are employed from a young age shape how we learn to value and to use those capabilities.

If the #metoo movement has shown us anything, it is that women's experiences of domination have been hidden in plain sight for a very long time. The Women's March, the fury over the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh to the United States Supreme Court, the predatory behavior of entertainment moguls like Harvey Weinstein and Woody Allen, the rise of the *incel* phenomenon, all of these have focused awareness and attention on the systems of domination that women endure.

This book is the culmination of six years of research into film, pop culture, sacred literature mythology, and working with women clients in psychotherapy. It started as a graduate thesis on women's portrayal in family film. Pretty soon everywhere I looked the archetypal examples showed themselves. In patriarchy there are only two categories for women to inhabit. One type of woman is acceptable, and another is not. The Women's Archetypal Journey is to see ***how*** she is split, and then to recollect and reunify the rendered pieces in her own way, and by her own volition. In doing so she rises above the domination, setting herself free, living a life of sovereignty over herself. She becomes a queen.

Clarissa Pinkola-Estes described a wild woman archetype in *Women Who Run with the Wolves*, analogous to the wild man in Robert Bly's *Iron John.* But no one has studied and exposed a unifying monomyth for women in the same vein as the Hero's Journey… until now. *THE QUEEN'S PATH: THE ARCHETYPAL JOURNEY FOR WOMEN* codifies the emergence of a set of female archetypes throughout history, mythology, and popular culture. It then takes these parallels and shows how there is a growing emergence of the Archetypal Feminine through a new lens. Some parts of our Western Imagination are ready (the arrival of characters like Katniss Everdeen and Queen Elsa), and others are still resisted with a vengeance (the presidential run of Hilary Clinton).

The book is designed for two primary audiences. Women who want to learn more about healing their own experience of the Divided Woman, and writers who create women characters. At the end of each chapter there is one exercise for personal development and one exercise for character development. In addition, there are two workbooks, one for individual women or women's book clubs, and the other dedicated to helping writers use THE QUEEN'S PATH to help develop women characters. Each chapter includes mythological, personal, literary, and pop culture references to help demonstrate the ideas in the chapter.

Background:

Joseph Campbell himself said that the great myths of culture, from the West to Asia were told by, and for, men. They are stories of MALE heroes. Marie-Louise von Franz and other Jungian and archetypal psychologists in the 20th Century studied women's representation in fairy tales, but von Franz was quick to point out that the stories were written down by men, and as such were not trustworthy representations of women's psycho-spiritual experience. While the

study of fairy tales has opened vast possibilities for women and men in the study of psychology, women have been left out of Campbell's monomyth, not intentionally, but effectively. Campbell himself offered that he didn't believe that the Hero's Journey was for women. He scoffed at the work of his student, Maureen Murdock, who outlined a heroine's journey. Campbell offered that he was sure that there was an analog for women, but because he had studied the men's archetypal journey, he was not educated about it, and therefore felt unequal to the task of discussing it.

Campbell's work showed that myths scattered across the globe are remarkably similar. In his analysis he offered that there are two possibilities for those origins: 1. There is a force in human consciousness that structures the numinous world of myth similarly because of our shared human biology and psychology, or 2. We have some common origin and the stories flow from that origin. Psychoanalyst Carl Jung posited that the similarities were the influence of the collective consciousness, a numinous force of life that binds us all together.

The Hero's Journey emerged as a structure across similar myths that Campbell used to describe the journey of a man's role in society, and the personal journey he takes to find meaning in it. The hero myth is universal, a version is found in every culture. It almost always entails the hero being called to an adventure, taking the hero away from their home. On that adventure, the hero learns what they truly believe, are engaged in behavior that redefines them in terms of who they are internally, and also who they are in relationship to the world. They bring this knowledge back to their people, and the hero is transformed, and changes everything they touch as a result.

This model has been adopted by film, television, novels, comic books, memoir, - effectively promoted to help structure every method of modern storytelling. Chris Vogler famously developed the Hero's Journey in service of filmmakers. His original fifteen page

outline sparked a cottage industry of Hero's Journey workshops and story models. His book *The Writer's Journey* has guided thousands of writers to rely on that model for developing narratives in everything from memoir to soap operas.

The Hero's Journey has also been examined psychologically. Psychologists, Psychotherapists and Psychoanalysts employ it as a means to challenge clients to consider the transformative paths available for men and women. Psychologists use it in every thing from individual analysis and therapy to addiction recovery and treating trauma. In pop psychology the Hero's Journey is a constant call to action, asking us to "answer the call" or "go on a quest". No one questions the universality of the message. But is it universal?

Where the Hero's Journey Falls Flat

There has been a fundamental problem with the myth of the hero. It was written, and exists archetypally, as a model for **men**. The hero's journey offers men a path to greatness. For women, the hero's journey sets us up to be OTHER. Over two thousand years ago the idea of what a woman could be was divided into two halves. This split accepted the passive form of what it means to be a woman, and exiled the active form. We find the mythological evidence to support this idea in the myths and stories of the past… and the present. In everything from Disney films to YA fiction, the *Divided Woman* is present. In the last twenty years or so she has been accompanied more frequently by her counterpart, the Queen, who represents the active version of woman, but with an important distinction. The queen has overcome the Divide.

The collective consciousness can suppress or embrace an archetype, but when the archetypal forces are ready to change, they rumble in the deep, and the collective must face them. This happens when we see big changes in culture. We are seeing it today in the global

political arena, and in the antiracism protests happening throughout the United States. As a result, or maybe because of these shifts, new kinds of heroes emerge. One of the most interesting changes is that in our popular culture, we are ripe with female protagonists, but we have yet to codify her story in the same vein as the Hero's Journey, even though the woman-driven archetypal journey has been with us for thousands of years.

Archetypes

Why should anyone care about archetypes? They permeate everything we do- they are unconscious imprints on our collective and individual psyches. Right now our culture is reeling from archetypes that have changed right before our eyes: The Strongman has replaced the Statesman. The Angry Man has replaced the Working Man. Female archetypes no longer hold. We have blunt instruments as archetypes for women: mom, bitch, hottie, boss-babe, dumb-blonde. Women's archetypes are changing, and we have not named them as yet. Culture is unprepared for this change- many journalists, politicians, and other leaders are shifting what they talk about, and HOW they report. But most are still trying to figure it out. Archetypes reflect the ideals of a culture. They last a long time because once they are defined, they are easy to reproduce through stories and mythology. Archetypes are critically important for connecting with people across cultures, in our communities, and even within our offices and families.

So why the Queen? Why not the Heroine?

The Heroine Archetype hasn't been defined phenomenologically in a way that is unique to women's journeys. In every existing model of the Heroine's Journey, she continues to be pulled into the hero's journey, each step of the the quest, defined in relationship to her

counterpart's experience. Grafted onto that myth, she appears to be just another impostor- a woman in a man's world. The Queen has her own story. Her story is unique- she overcomes the internalized patriarchy- she becomes *sovereign* over her own life.

Authors who explore the journey of a feminine hero, like Maureen Murdock or Victoria Schmidt make a distinction between the two. Their works appropriately focus on an internal struggle. They posit that women must heal a cultural wound in order to overcome adversity, in that vein, my findings are similar. Both authors advocate for a union in the end, similar to my work. However, they miss the impact of their story models. For Murdock in particular, her model advocates a union of masculine and feminine, within the individual woman, rather than something outside of that paradigm.

The problem with models that advocate for a "Heroine's Journey" is that the form of the protagonist (whether a character in a story, or a living, breathing woman) is still defined by a relationship to men, or to maleness. THE QUEEN'S PATH is BIGGER than that, because it examines what happens to women for themselves, within a patriarchal culture. In a sense, the model is still defined by patriarchy, but an individual woman is not going back and forth between feminine and masculine identities. Rather, because of the patriarchal systems we live in, a woman can identify herself in the divide, and then slowly piece together a path to reunify the abjected pieces of HERSELF, not an internalized masculine other. When she does so she is free of the psychological bonds of the patriarchy, even as she still lives within it.

The Divided Woman

To understand the queen, we first need to examine her path to the throne. Every woman is a DIVIDED WOMAN. Around the age of eight or so, little girls begin to notice gendered

behavior, as people start to treat them differently because of their "role" in culture. Little girls begin to notice their weight, bodies, hair, clothes, and the behavior of the older women around them. Prescriptions like, "Be a lady," "Be polite," and my personal favorite, "Be nice," meet little girls at every turn. We are trained to be submissive from a very early age. Women experience the world through the powerful experience of being divided early in our lives. When women are little girls we are shown only two options for what archetypal patterns are available to us. For most of us, we don't get to choose the path. A track is chosen for us.

This book ultimately is about the rendering that girls endure, and the consequences for us as women. It weaves a way of looking at life, and the narratives we tell ourselves through memory and culture. We can go through our archetypal journey and emerge as a queen, or we can live in a way that leaves our voice unheard- either because it is muffled in submission, or because it is exiled to the desert.

To get to the heart of this divide, and explore the way the woman's monomyth endures, I examined modern retellings of fairy tales, films, novels, sacred literature, broadway plays, historical accounts, and the lives of my patients. Everywhere I looked two halves of the divide started to emerge. On one side was an ever-youthful ingenue-type, and on the other side was a powerful, magical, witch-type. Once I identified it in these forms, I started to see it in everyday life. I saw it emerge in politics in the 2016 election cycle. I saw it turn up in the way that young women were being treated in the animation studio where I worked at one time. I saw it in every film or television series that told a story about women. I saw it in books, and novels. I saw it in powerful memoirs that I loved. I looked back at my own life and saw it in my relationships with friends and family over several decades. I saw it in the lives of my female patients, and their

partners. I saw it in the expectations of my patients regardless of their gender, presentation, or sexual orientation. In many ways this new lens through which to examine feminine power was a gift. However, it was also very painful to realize that I had been caught in a system, completely blind to the fact that I had been caught. All of the women I knew and loved had been caught blind in it too.

I don't know a woman who hasn't encountered the divide. I also haven't yet met a woman who is consciously aware of it in the archetypal way I describe. I have presented this material at writer's conferences, women's gatherings, and even at parties. When I'm done, the stares begin. Women have told me that they are grateful, or that they are angry. I have described something for them that they thought was personal, and that is actually a sublime structure, whose gears are invisible. And yet, we are all operating within it, and as women, we are usually ground into it, until we become part of it.

I have met women who rebel against expectations, insulted that I deign to infer they didn't get to make a choice, -even as they fight against the stereotypes associated with power and isolation. I have met women who try to have it all and who are stymied to find themselves depressed as they once again run up against cultural norms, despite having done everything to exceed their family's, parents', partners', or their own expectations. All women become the Divided Woman, that is why the story itself is archetypal.

Women's lives move from girlhood into one of the two tracks of the divided woman. Historically, the familiar sides of the divide are ingenue and witch. But these tropes are too easy. They obscure the idea that there is an archetypal pattern at work. In examining films, stories, and myths, I have found that the same two paths appear over and over. I have named each lane based

on an acronym of its attributes. Existing archetypal images like warrior, witch, innocent, and ingenue are too rich with existing biases, and don't lend themselves to a dispassionate examination. Instead my archetypes in this analysis are based on their behavior or attributes.

Track one, is the path of the MISOR (Maiden in Search of Relationship), this track is socially acceptable, it leads women to be partnered with men of power, and teaches them to be compliant. You might associate this with the ingenue, but she is not always. She can be Snow White, or she can be Regina George from *Mean Girls*. The second path is a lane that leads towards power, but it also brings the threat of isolation, and excision. This is the path of the MIPE (Magical, Isolated, Powerful, and Endangered). The path of the MIPE is filled with personal power, but has no guarantee of safety. The MIPE can be as straightforward as Alex Forrest in *Fatal Attraction*, or can be complex and lovable like Shug Avery in *The Color Purple*.

I have chosen to refer to these two counterpart archetypes (or sub-archetypes) by their anagrams MIPE & MISOR to avoid some of the reductions that have accompanied them in words like *ingenue* and *witch*. If you need to simplify them it's not hard to see them as Magical & Mundane, Powerful & Powerless, Whore & Madonna. But those images are already so intellectually, emotionally, and psychologically charged that they become problematic. The more I researched them, the more important it became to give them a new name that endeavors to relate to the rendered halves dispassionately and with more options for categorization.

Maiden In Search of Relationship (MISOR)

- Typically an ingénue, innocent, maiden, or matron
- Has good relationship skills, knows how to get along
- Typically seen as available (for sex, or other people's needs)
- Her power is attached to a man, a system of power, or her family
- Idealized as a sexual object (but isn't allowed/ expected to, or doesn't necessarily enjoy sex)
- Intuitive & Understanding
- Needs protection
- Has no obvious magical powers
- May be "Cursed"
- Wants to be Connected, especially to sisters/ mothers
- May have "magical contact" **with** nature

Magical Isolated Powerful & Endangered (MIPE)

- Often portrayed as a witch, whore, bitch, or magical creature
- Struggles with relationships, especially with family and other women
- Isolated by choice or by culture
- Born with "magical powers" (intelligence, independence, confidence, or magic)
- May be portrayed as asexual, or overly sexual (not desired unless ruled over)
- Magical and Powerful
- Is unprotected and isolated
- Can be angry and hold a grudge
- Is often mysteriously shunned
- May feel "cursed"
- Avoids connection, often because she is afraid of being misunderstood
- May have "magical power" **over** nature

Because these archetypes have been unnamed, or poorly named for so long, as women we are usually unaware we are being herded into them. We don't realize that they are binary. Culture insists that there are ways out of them, that feminism has worked. We believe in the myth of gender parity, and ignore the archetypal energies that still pervade our culture. But in a patriarchal society, these archetypes persist. Women of all ages and cultures compare themselves against ideals that align with these binaries.

When I had completed the model, I shared it with a group of trusted friends for their input. My friend, Shannon, left as soon as I stopped the presentation, excusing herself because she felt ill. She emailed me when she got home and reported that my model helped her finally make sense of her struggles to have children, and to reconcile her life with her family of origin. Her entire life came into focus in understanding that her family had put her on the track of

motherhood, the MISOR, and her deep intellectual capacity and love of learning had banished her to the track of the mystical MIPE. Sending her across the country to Los Angeles, far from her hometown in Minnesota. The family could never "see" Shannon. They could only see that she didn't meet their archetypal projection, and they struggled to understand why she didn't or couldn't fit into it. She always wanted to BE the MISOR, but could not wrangle her powerful intellect into submission enough to make it work well for her, this put her squarely in the category of the MIPE, against her will. When we talked about it together days later she reported that while it hurt her, she felt relieved to understand that there was an archetypal force at work, not one that made her responsible for not fitting into the confines of the MISOR and the expectations associated with her.

Magical Isolated Powerful and Endangered - MIPE (MEE-pay)

Think of Elsa, Elphaba, Maleficent, or Lilith. The identity of this half is often portrayed as power-hungry, magical, enchanted. She is very rarely seen in a sympathetic light. Historically, through our myths and stories, this character is often portrayed as irredeemable, precisely because she is exiled (and sometimes the other way around). She is sometimes portrayed as being outside of human relationships, either because her power is dangerous, or because she cannot relate to other women.

Maiden in Search of Relationship - MISOR (MEE-sohr)

This character is the one we are most familiar with in childhood: Snow White, Cinderella, Anna, Aurora, Eve. The identity of this half of the archetype is portrayed as innocent, aligned with the timid side of nature. She is seen as passive, allowing of men's power. This character

has no need for redemption *because* she is innocent, a state she is forced to maintain. She is always seeking human relationships, often trying to be helpful.

The Queen's Risks

When an individual woman has united these two split selves, she can lay claim to her own self-sovereignty, take up the crown of her soul, and forge her own path. She becomes Queen. If she attempts to become sovereign from only the MIPE side, a woman can become a tyrant, to herself and others. If she attempts to become sovereign from only her MISOR side, she is a passive consort to a king, always in search of someone to save her. Most women try to experience sovereignty from one side or the other because there is no guidebook for self-sovereignty. We are given contradictory advice about how to win at life. These messages are crazy making.

- Be available/Be unobtainable
- Be effortless/But work hard
- Be agreeable/But mysterious
- Be intuitive/Know more than everyone else to be taken seriously
- Be like-able/Be confident

In order to hold her own power, a woman must unify the two halves of her being, identify her primary archetype (MIPE or MISOR) and then reconnect to the other side (the sub-archetype), unifying these two halves, reclaiming the lost sister-self. She will always be more one side than the other, and that is expected, welcomed. Her journey is to find HER unique powers. Sovereignty is impossible without both sides unified in relationship with one another, not for the benefit of anyone but the woman herself.

Familiar MISORs, MIPEs, and Queens

The Divided Woman is everywhere. She shows up in every woman's personal story. She appears in every film, every television series, every novel, every memoir. When storytellers attempt to place a woman in a hero's journey, the story falls flat. A great example of a story where they try to tell a woman's story without the Queen's Path is in the latest *Star Wars* trilogy. The character of Rey is put on a hero's journey. As a result, the audience struggles to identify with her. Rey could be replaced by a man, or a little boy, and there would be no difference to her journey. If we lived in a post-patriarchal world, this might be different- but we do not live in that world yet. Women are still battling the divide every day.

The Divided Woman appears in the world in everything from sacred literature and fairy tales to history and pop culture.

Once you "see" the Divided Woman, you'll see her everywhere. The archetype has been with us for the last few thousand years of storytelling. What is new is that she is moving into a new identity, where the Divided Woman, through a series of trials becomes a Queen. By reconciling the broken pieces, she has the opportunity to gain sovereignty over herself. She has been emerging as a queen in contemporary history, novels, movies, and pop culture. She is leading women to reconcile the rendering given to us in patriarchy, and guiding us to take ownership of our own lives and destinies.

MISORs	*MIPEs*
Ophelia	Gertrude
Juliet	Lady Capulet
Elle Woods (pre Harvard)	Elle Woods (at Harvard)
Lydia Bennet	Elizabeth Bennet
Diana of Themyscira	Wonder Woman
Eve	Lilith
Ellen Ripley	Xenomorph XX121 (The Alien)
Queen Elizabeth II	Princess Di
Celie Johnson	Shug Avery
Willow	Buffy
Daenerys Targerian	Cersei Lannister
Sansa Stark	Arya Stark
Serena Joy	June Osborne
Mary of Nazareth	Mary Magdalene
Dr. Harleen Quinzel	Harley Quinn
Anna	Elsa
Aurora	Maleficent
Penance Adair	Amalia True

Recognizable Queens	
Oprah Winfrey	Elle Woods at Graduation from Harvard
Michelle Obama	Celie Johnson at the end of *The Color Purple*
Queen Victoria	Diana Prince at the end of *Wonder Woman*
Lady Gaga	Sansa Stark at the end of *Game of Thrones*
Maya Angelou	
Beyoncé	

Chapter Outline

Section One: the World of the Queen

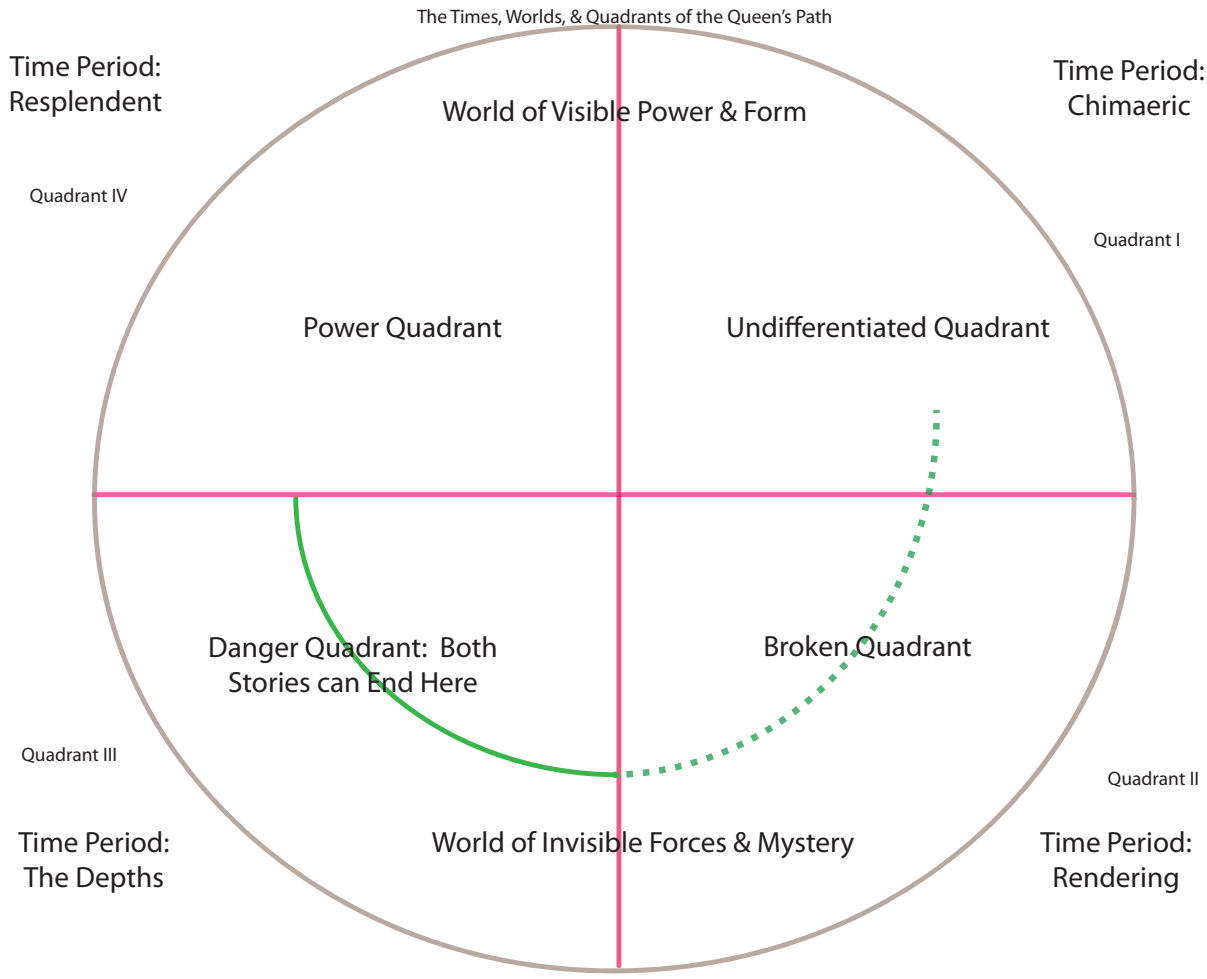
Brief intro to the section. Discussion of the archetypal model, introduction to the wheel of the model and how it is laid out. Brief intro to what lies ahead. Examination of the current use of the Queen archetype and how she is emerging organically in everything from linguistics ("YAASSSS QUEEN") to social media meme's.

Introduction: The World is Run by Archetypes

Carl Jung introduced us to the word "archetype" but the concept has been with us since Plato's *Forms*. Every culture has sacred forms (Gods or goddesses, saviors, sacred ideas, or concepts) that are used to embody the grand metaphors of life. Some of these are easily accessible, "God the Father" and others are very complex like "American". Everything in culture is run by archetype and metaphor, from our political ideas to our most sacred religious beliefs. In order to understand how we fit into those archetypal ideas, we must first know how to recognize them. This chapter explores how the world of archetypes affects us, and helps set the stage for the work in the following chapters.

Chapter 1: Women in Captivity: Introduction to the Worlds and the Quadrants

Before jumping into the deep end of this new way of looking at women's narratives, we must first understand the structure of the model. The model consists of a circle, broken into four quadrants. Two quadrants above a horizon line, and two below it. The model begins at 12 o'clock and rotates around clockwise. But the quarters and halves represent different structures. The upper half of the circle is the visible world, which is punctuated by power and form. The



lower half of the circle is the invisible world, punctuated by mystery and unknowable forces. These can be thought of as the conscious world, above the horizon, and the unconscious, below the horizon. It is is critical to not reduce these structures too far, less we lose their complexity. This chapter discusses the structure of the model, and can be used as a reference for the reader throughout the book.

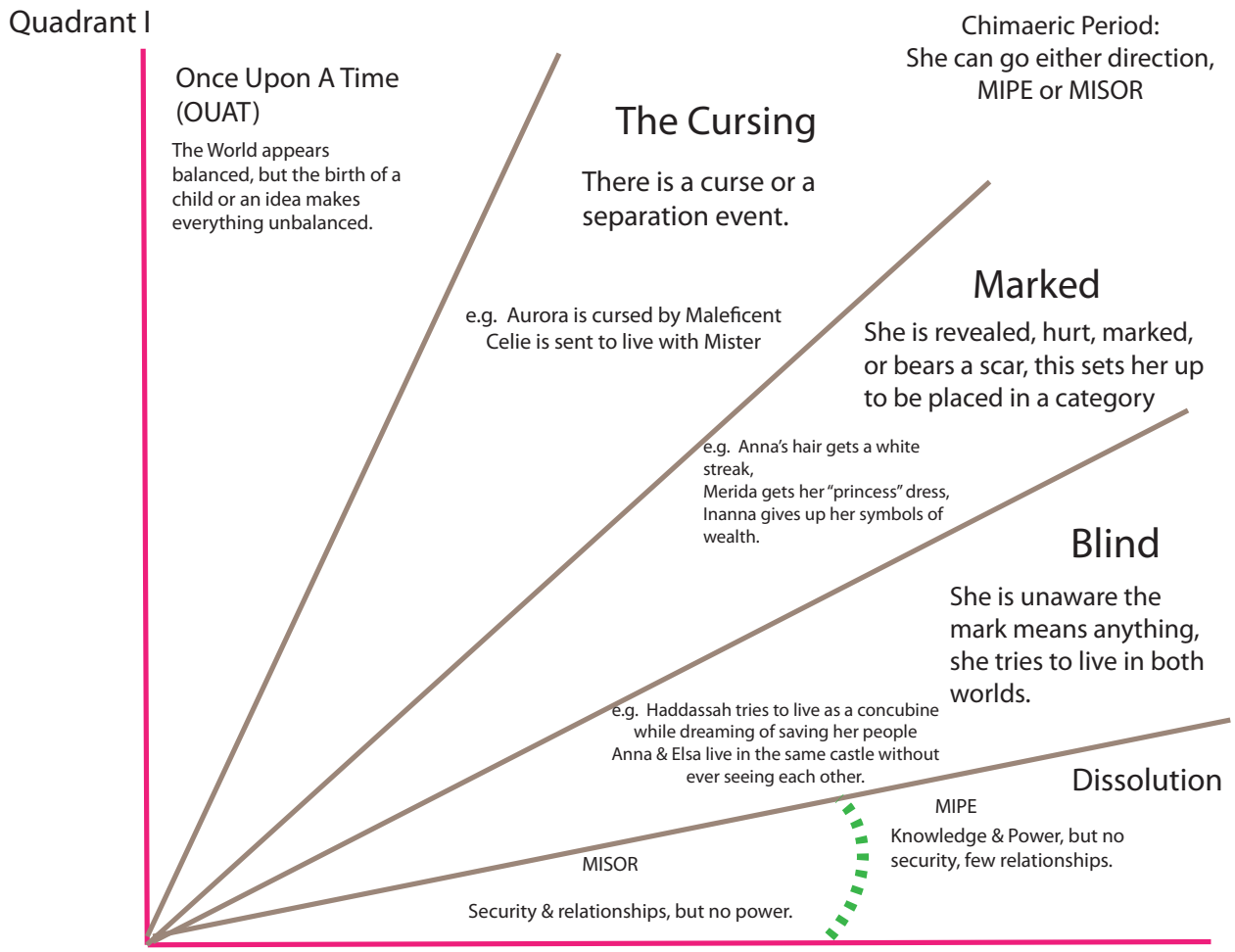
Chapter 2: Who is The Divided Woman?

As early as 500 B.C.E. Sun Tzu instructed generals and kings in the use of division in conquering countries, lands, and peoples. "If your opponent is temperamental, seek to irritate him... If his forces are united, separate them. If sovereign and subject are in accord,

put division between them.“ Women’s stories have reproduced this division for as long as we have been writing stories down. Women have been trained to turn on themselves and one another practically, politically, and in relationships --from neighborhood Tupperware parties to high school mean girls. This division is easily exposed in women’s mythology, as in the story of the first women, Lilith and Eve, to the fairy tales of Cinderella and her stepsisters, right down to the present day in the telling of stories like *Frozen* or *The Handmaid’s Tale*. In this chapter I introduce the concept of the divided woman, and preview the new unity that is emerging in a renewed mythology where THE QUEEN'S PATH is possible. The MIPE and MISOR are introduced with an explanation of how to identify your own identification with these archetypes.

Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises asking the reader to identify where they are in the Divide. Are they a MISOR who is not satisfied with the life of wife and mother? Are they a MIPE who longs for a partner and domestic tranquility? A set of categories will be provided to help readers identify their primary subarchetype.

- ☆For personal narratives: Which path do you think you have lived most of your life on. What has this cost you? Are you a MIPE longing to be a MISOR? Are you a MISOR who thought that the world made perfect sense? Do the people around you expect you to fit neatly into a category?
- ☆For writers: What characteristics define your character? Is she strong-willed? How about demure? Does she have more MISOR or MIPE characteristics? How will you demonstrate these?



Section Two: The Chimaeric Period

Introduction to the Chimaeric world of being undifferentiated. In this brief introduction I discuss the overall nature of the first quadrant, and the journey that will take place there. From the first "pie piece" of this quadrant where we discuss the meaning of "Once Upon a Time" to the final pie piece which is the gateway from the upper world of visible power and form to the underworld, filled with danger and mystery. The chimaeric section of the model moves the

woman through the experience of being undifferentiated to the first hint of becoming the Divided Woman.

Chapter 3: Once Upon a Time

This chapter discusses the first “pie piece” in the model. Every fairy tale begins here. The story begins with “once” indicating something special, a separation from the normal course of events. And then, “Upon a Time,” tells us that the story is outside of time, removed from the linear narrative of history. This opening implies that the story is timeless, eternal. Beginning it as an eternal story also sets up the introduction to the “girl’s” life. She is outside of time. Her story IS always disruptive. Women wield the power of life, and as such, the arrival of a woman’s story always has the power to remake the world. In this chapter we discuss the disruptive power of women, and then open the discussion of the model by talking about what it means to start out in the world *undifferentiated*. At the beginning of a woman’s life, she is not yet set on the tracks of the Divided Woman. She has all the power and possibility of life before her. In this chapter some examples of “undifferentiated" story beginnings are shared: The Garden of Eden, *Legally Blonde*, *The Color Purple*, *Wicked, Wonder Woman, and The Wizard of Oz*.

Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises asking the reader to tell their origin story.

- ☆For personal narratives: Can you find the themes of innocence and being undifferentiated in your life? When did you feel most powerful during your childhood?
- ☆For writers: What is the landscape and how do we know the character is undifferentiated? What tells us that she has not yet been introduced to the divide?

Chapter 4: Cursed & Marked

This is the beginning of understanding the Divided Woman. In stories, and in real women's lives, we begin to feel unsettled. Something in the deep begins to show us that things are not what they appear to be. The curse of being female is "given" to us. In fairy tales, this often comes as an actual curse by another character, or by magical powers. Aurora is cursed by Maleficent in *Sleeping Beauty*. Anna is accidentally cursed by her sister in *Frozen*. Or it can be a symbolic curse, demonstrated as a sexual identity coming forward. For Celie in *The Color Purple* it is being sexually abused, and her children taken from her. The curse doesn't always take a sexual form, but it almost always bears the weight of a woman's power over birth. The purpose of the curse is to remind a woman that she is a subject first, and a woman second. The mark is connected to the curse. Sometimes in stories it is a physical scar or wound, Anna's shock of white hair in *Frozen*. It could also be a cultural "stamp" like the "A" worn in *The Scarlet Letter.* It's Janine losing her eye in *The Handmaid's Tale*. It's Celie getting slapped hard in the face by Mister when she talks back to him. In personal stories it can be a hard slap across the face when a woman tells her mother that she has her first period. No matter where we go, women make sense of their *curse*, through their *mark*.

Exercises: The chapter ends with exercises asking the reader to tell a story of cursing and marking.

- ☆For personal narratives: What moment defines the change from childhood to adolescence for you? Can you look back and see any aspect of the experience as similar to being cursed? Did you bear any mark, or receive any physical sign of this experience? Was there a scar? What about physical or sexual abuse?

☆For writers: How will you demonstrate the girl's transition from child to woman? What makes this obvious for your reader? What physical, psychological, or sexual mark will she receive to make it clear that she has been cursed, and marked?

Chapter 5: Blind

Almost every woman, whether in her own story, or in a powerful narrative like *The Color Purple* or Cheryl Strayed's *Wild*, goes through a period where she tries to see beyond the divide. She doesn't believe in it. Culture tells her there is no divide. Society says she's crazy. Pop-psychology tells her to just lean-in. "There is no divide, it's all you!" She tries, and fails to make sense of her story as she desperately tries to piece together the path blindfolded, while the women around her, or the business she is in, or her compatriots also pretend that there is no divide, even as they treat her in an alignment with her archetypal lane. Sometimes the character is met by a powerful seer, someone who sees the divide and tries to point it out. Most times though, the woman, or the character, is left in the darkness. For Cheryl Strayed on the Pacific Crest Trail, her blindness begins with her drug use after her mother's death, and continues into her preparing for her hike. For Celie in *The Color Purple* it is when Sophia confronts Celie about advising Harpo to beat his wife. In the 2018 film, *I Feel Pretty*, the main character Renee is actually blind to reality, having been hit on the head in an accident, she sees herself only as she wishes to be.

Exercises: The chapter ends with exercises asking the reader to tell the story of how they were blinded to the divide.

- ☆For personal narratives: What did your family or community do when you first noticed that things were unfair? Did someone tell you it was your fault? Did a beloved woman in your life teach you how to hide your gifts, or warn you against using them?
- ☆For writers: What circumstances are unique to this character's world? Are women treated differently because of their education? Their race? Their beauty? Their secrets? How will your character hide her gifts, or find herself struggling to fit in?

Chapter 6: Dissolution

The Divide is in view, it is coming for you. In stories this is when the character starts to notice that something is off, something is about to happen. Sometimes this is the "inciting incident" of the story. The moment from which there is no turning back. Women sometimes believe that they have a choice, but they have only two options. They see the MISOR and the MIPE paths. They fear being put into one. They resist. But the divide is coming for them, the archetype will live through them. This is Elsa preparing for her coronation. It is Celie telling Nettie that she knows her sister will need to leave soon. It is Cheryl Strayed when she realizes that she wants to "be alone".

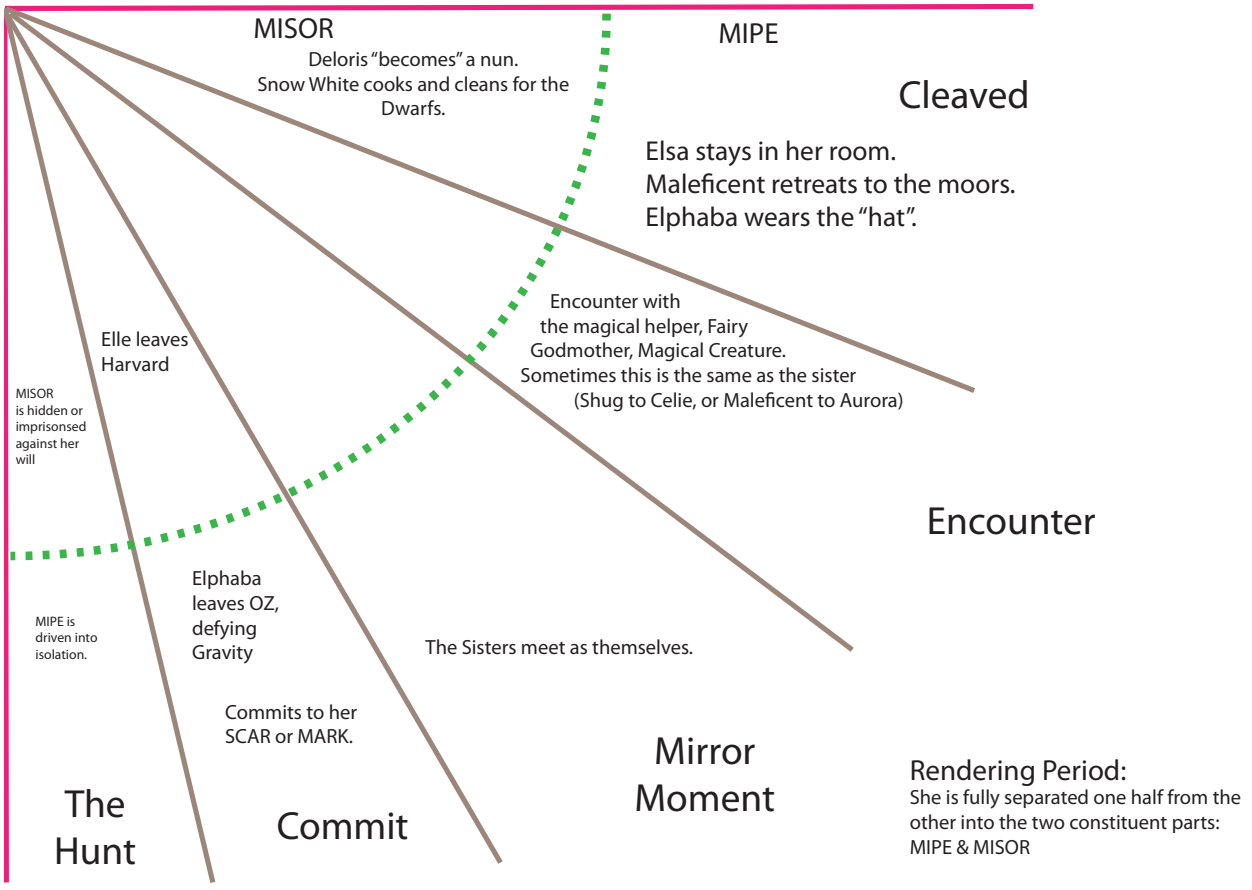
Exercises: The chapter ends with exercises asking the reader to look at the moment in their lives when the Divided Woman first showed up in HER life, intimating that she herself was about to be put on a track.

- ☆For personal narratives: What did your family or community do when you first noticed that things were unfair? Did someone tell you it was your fault? Did a beloved woman in your life teach you how to hide your gifts, or warn you against using them?

☆For writers: What circumstances are unique to this character's world? Are women treated differently because of their education? Their race? Their beauty? Their secrets? How will your character hide her gifts, or find herself struggling to fit in? How does she see the women around her?

Section Three: The Rendering

The girl is now squarely in the underworld, in the world of invisible powers and mystery. The only way out is through. In the second quadrant the woman has to face the divide. She is being groomed for a track of either being a MISOR or a MIPE. As she traverses this quadrant she will start to see her place in the world, and she will push against it. The pie pieces generally fall in order, but sometimes they shift a little bit in this quadrant.



Chapter 7: Cleaved

This experience breaks the woman. She is separated from her sister self. This can be in the form of a narrative where the woman is separated from a literal sister or mother. Or it can be the first time that a character is made aware of the binary options for women. Cleaving is when the character is forced into her lane. She will live as a MISOR or a MIPE whether she likes it or not. In *The Color Purple* this is when Nettie is forced to leave the Johnson's farm, Nettie will be a MIPE in relation to Celie. In the book and play *Wicked*, it is when Elphaba leaves her family for the University of Shiz, off to figure out how to live a magical life and save the Animals (book), seeing herself squarely in her role as a MIPE. In *Waitress* it is when Jenna realizes she can't escape her husband, she will be a MISOR, longing for relationship. In Patty Jenkin's *Wonder Woman* this moment comes when Diana leaves Themiscyra and is told she cannot return, she is a MIPE, endangered without the protection of the Amazons.

Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises asking the reader to look at the moment the woman finds herself on either the MIPE or MISOR track.

- ☆For personal narratives: Describe the moment you realized that you were in one group, or the other, or perhaps in the "in" group, or in NO group. What was that experience like? Were you bullied? How did you respond to either belonging or not belonging? What toll did it take on you?
- ☆For writers: How will you show the character being placed in a track? Which track will she find herself in? MIPE or MISOR? What are the circumstances that put her there, and how does she respond? Does she like it? Does she feel repressed? Does she feel overwhelmed? Does she feel she is in the wrong track? Does she long for the "sister-side"?

Chapter 8: Encounter

The protagonist sees a version of her sister self. Sometimes this is a magical encounter, sometimes it is seeing an option from a distance. It can lead to the mirror moment, where the protagonist sees her "other" in the mirror, either admiringly or recoiling against her. The encounter is the first hint, and how it unfolds is critical to the journey the MIPE or MISOR will take. How does she treat the "other" in the encounter? In *Frozen* this is the coronation ball, when Elsa and Anna are exchanging polite words on the dais. In *The Color Purple*, it is when Mister brings Shug Avery home for the first time. In the Broadway version of *Wicked*, this is when Glinda and Elphaba are paired in their dorm room together.

Exercises: The chapter ends with exercises asking the reader to look at the moment they had to examine the "other" side, and how that experience created internal distinctions between the sister-sides.

- ☆For personal narratives: Describe a moment you saw someone you admired, who you wanted to emulate. What did you notice about them? What track were they on? How did seeing them make you feel? Did you compare yourself?
- ☆For writers: How will your character react to being placed in a track? Is there someone on the "sister-side" that makes her feel something? Is she a MISOR feeling at home and ostracizes the MIPE? Or is she a MIPE longing to belong or understood?

Chapter 9: Mirror Moment

This is the moment when the woman sees her herself AND the sister side in their respective lanes, for the first time. She may hope to escape. She starts to see herself as inside or outside in a meaningful way. She reacts in shame, anger, acceptance, pity, or rage. Often the door

to see her own circumstance is through the assistance of her sister self. Either the woman is mirrored for the first time by her counterpart or a powerful other, or she sees her reflection in the sister self. In *Waitress*, this is the moment where Jenna realizes that her friend and co-worker is also having an affair. In *Frozen* it is when Anna confronts Elsa in the Ice Castle. In sacred literature of the New Testament it is when Mary visits her cousin Martha who is also pregnant. At this point in the woman's life she earnestly believes that she can use her lane to her advantage.

Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises asking the reader to reflect on the ways that their role was reflected back to them, forcing them to reproduce the projections and expectations associated with their lane and role.

- ☆For personal narratives: Describe a moment you saw that other people had expectations of you? Were these associated with a role (MISOR/MIPE)? How did you navigate the experience? These could be small things like being told you're pretty or smart, or it can be sitting on the floor in your sister's room identifying with her or realizing you couldn't be like her.
- ☆For writers: Who will represent the sister self? If your story is a single character transformation, she will need someone to represent the version of herself that she is separated from. If there are two sisters, you will need them to confront one another. What does this look like? What are the circumstances?

Chapter 10: Commit

Once she sees *herself*, the woman commits to the lane she occupies. If she's a MISOR she's going to be the best housewife, mother, secretary, or helpmeet possible. If she's a MIPE

she's going to stop hiding, and instead use her powers, and she knows that those powers were given to her for a reason! Sometimes this commitment has the best intentions, with a woman believing that the purity of her effort will bring her the happiness she desires. But this happiness rarely comes. In this moment *Legally Blonde's* Elle Woods commits to studying, the montage of her successful efforts bringing her satisfaction at Harvard Law School. In *Maleficent* it is when the eponymous character starts to tutor Aurora, meeting her secretly at night. In the film, *I Feel Pretty* with Amy Schumer it is when Renee dedicates herself to her role at Lily LeClaire cosmetics, helping to turn things around. In sacred literature, this is Mary of Nazareth telling her betrothed, Joseph that she is with child. In *Frozen* it is the powerful scene and song, *Let it Go* when Elsa builds her Ice Castle on the North Mountain. In the musical version of *Wicked*, this is Elphaba's commitment to be independent marked by the song *Defying Gravity*. In Patty Jenkin's *Wonder Woman*, this is Diana taking charge and heading into the battlefield at the beginning of Act II.

Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises asking the reader to reflect on at least one decision that defined them IN their lane.

- ☆For personal narratives: Describe a decision you made that signaled a commitment to the lane you're identified with. This is likely something BIG, but it doesn't have to be BIG to someone outside of you. It can be moving across the country, or deciding to dress a certain way. It is a symbol of your doubling down on the path of either the MIPE or the MISOR.
- ☆For writers: What situation forces the character to commit to her lane? How does this make her feel? Does she WANT to commit to this track, or does she feel she has no choice?

Chapter 11: The Hunt

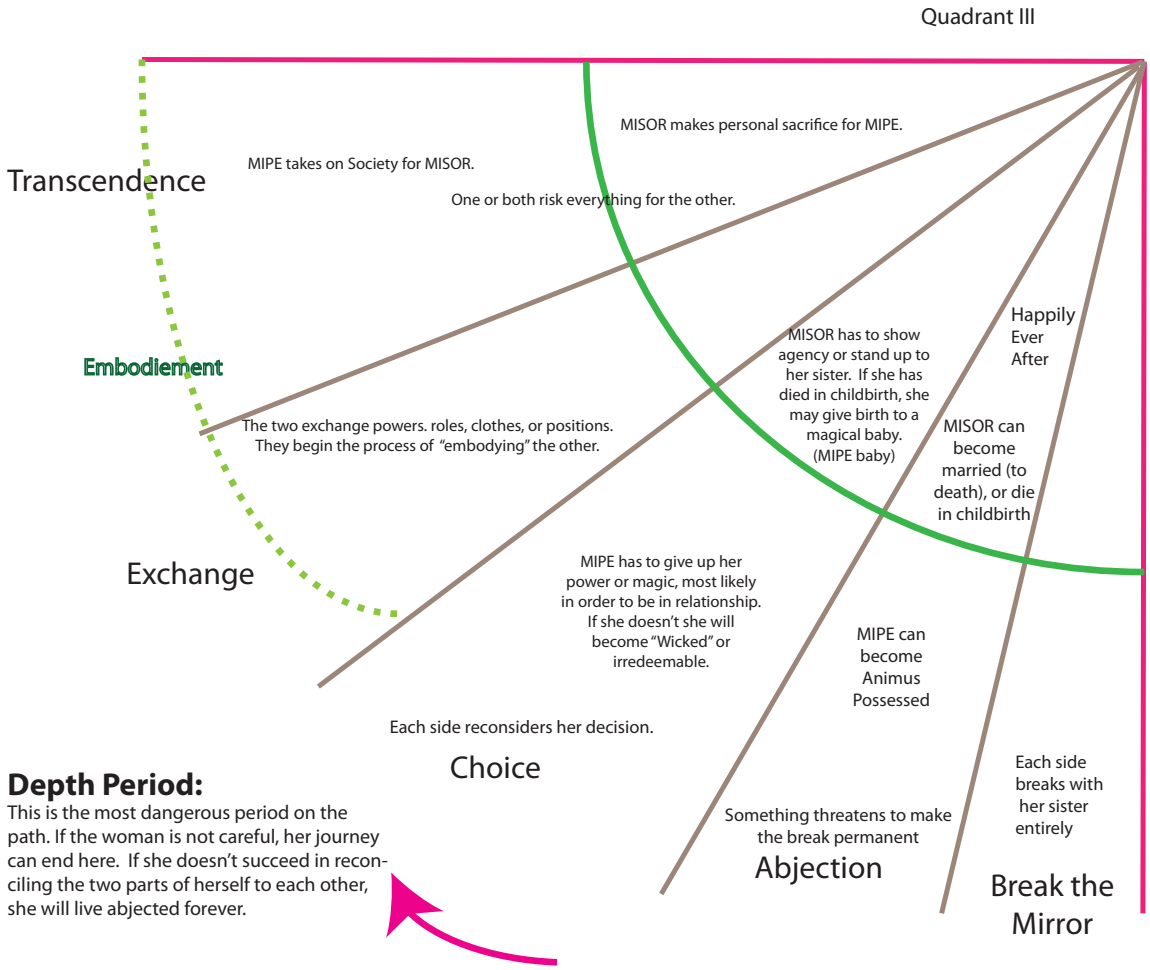
The transitions between the quadrants are always intense, fraught with fear and threats. The transition from the second to the third quadrant is filled with anxiety and danger. The woman is hunted, chased, or perhaps she has turned the tables and is doing some of her own hunting. If the woman is a MISOR she will be chased through the underworld, the forest, or another frightening, wild place. If she is a MIPE, she may be the one doing the chasing, trying to force a man, or her sister self into a role that helps her achieve a goal, usually one that she presumes will give her power or a treasured state (motherhood, being married, a prestigious position). This can feel like a quest. Sometimes the goal that is the object of the hunt has the qualities of the hero's quest, but the achievement falls flat for the Divided Woman. She cannot truly have the object of her desire WITHOUT sovereignty.

Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises. What is chasing the reader? What has chased her in her life? What has she chased? Career success? Motherhood?

- ☆For personal narratives: How has the chase or the hunt affected you? Have you found yourself pursued by someone or something? How has this been told in your story? Did you run away from anything or anyone? Run TO someone or someplace?
- ☆For writers: What is your character haunted by? What chases her, and in response is she chasing something? Motherhood? Career success? Fame? What is she longing for?

<u>Section Four: The Depths</u>

In this quadrant, the woman is in real danger. It is in this quadrant that fairy tales and stories of monstrous women end. In this quadrant we find The Happily Ever After (HEA) ending, and the Animus Possession (AP) ending. Animus possession is a Jungian term that highlights the



experience of women when they are overly driven by what Jung called the Animus or "masculine side" of their psyche. In this quadrant, the woman has emerged from the chase or the hunt and she is faced with either a "happy ending" where she submits to men, family, culture (HEA), or professional success (AP) without fulfillment. The HEA ends with her married or having children without her own imperative, without a meaning to her life outside of those. The AP ending sees her giving up any culturally accepted "feminine" identity, ie, submissive and/or mothering and striving for ego, career, or financial success.

As the woman traverses the depths, she is at real risk to lose not only her identity, but her life. She can be absorbed in the experience of the HEA and be invisible except as a wife and

mother. She can die of sadness, or her life can end violently if she identifies with the MISOR and a man, culture, or even if she herself wishes to stay "pure". Her life can also end if she cannot be subsumed enough for her children or partner. She is no safer if she takes the track of the AP. She can lose her identity, and her life there too. In the AP ending, she either dies alone and isolated, or her life ends through violence because she wants too much power, which is a threat to those around her.

Chapter 12: Break the Mirror

In this chapter I examine how the woman sees her sister self and is angered, enraged, or hurt. Sometimes this is a protection, or a defense mechanism. Sometimes it comes in the form of a betrayal. Breaking the mirror is almost always painful. When we break the mirror it is because we cannot bear to look at the "other" side. In movies like *Frozen*, this moment comes for Anna and Elsa when Anna comes to the ice castle to confront Elsa and get her to come home and bring back summer. In *The Color Purple*, it is when Celie is reading one of the letters and is envisioning the life of her sister Nettie. Mister slaps her hard, making her nose bleed. Celie considers cutting Mister's throat rather than continue to be abused by him. In mythology you can find this in the story of Demeter Erinys (angry Demeter) who when she can't find her daughter, Persephone, wanders the world letting everything die around her. Hecate comes to Demeter to tell her that Persephone has been taken to the Underworld. This is the moment when Princess Di seriously considers suicide after learning of her husband's affair. It is the moment in *Game of Thrones* when Sansa Stark is remanded to the sadistic Ramsey Bolton as a bride.

Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises that ask the reader to consider the places where there have been "broken mirrors" in her life.

☆For personal narratives: Write about how you have broken relationships, or have had breaks with others when there has been something you cannot look at, or if you have been a representative that another could no longer bear? Describe the break with compassion for yourself. If you take on the role of a loving sister now, how do you see that that experience. What do you notice about the difference in perspectives?

☆For writers: What or who does your character see when she looks in the mirror after the chase? Does she see a monster? Does she see a victim? What does she want to see, versus what does she actually see? How will you describe this part of her journey?

Chapter 13: Abjection

This chapter describes the crisis of abandonment. Women often “perform" the experience of their own abandonment by denouncing the part of herself she feels she must reject in order to survive. After breaking the mirror, the woman vows never to allow her sister side ***in*** again. She commits to disowning or completely destroying her sister self. Often *Breaking the Mirror* and *Abjection* happen quickly one right after the other. In a woman’s life this often happens against her will. She is forced to “lose” this side of herself. Some women never recover. For example, a woman who has always been a MISOR, whose husband leaves her, may never forgive him, she may hate the MIPE life so much that she refuses to become independent. This is why this quadrant is so dangerous. It is ripe with opportunities for the divide to become permanent, ossified. A woman can “die” in, or because of, her Happily Ever After. The same is true of choosing a career. A woman can “die" because of her effort to force her visibility through Animus Possession. This needn’t be an actual death, it is enough to refuse the call to sovereignty, which requires that she go back and heal the divide in herself.

In *Frozen*, this moment comes when Elsa is overwhelmed by her sister's pleas to return to Arendelle. There is a reprise of her "Let it Go" song, that ends with… "I can't", when she launches a flare of magic that pierces her sister's heart. In *The Color Purple*, this moment comes when Celie decides to leave Mister once and for all over Thanksgiving dinner. In *Legally Blonde*, this moment comes for Elle when after her professor hits on her, her sister-self, Vivian confronts her in the elevator, reminding Elle that she's just a dumb blonde after all, "Callahan never saw me as a lawyer, all he saw was a piece of ass." Elle decides to leave Harvard at that moment. It is in the abjection phase of the model that the character is confronted by choosing an HEA or AP ending. If she chooses the HEA, then the story ends with a wedding or death. If the woman chooses the AP ending, then she is banished or killed. An example of the AP ending in death can be found in 1987's *Fatal Attraction*. Alex Forest, who has an affair with the protagonist, Dan Gallagher, becomes obsessed with him. In her pursuit of him she wants desperately to have the life that his wife has, wanting a baby with her new love interest. She dies, killed by her sister self, Dan's wife, Beth. The most frequent genre to end the movie for a female character in this stage is the horror genre. This abjection happens every day in real women's lives. We push aside the ambitions, or the intellectual curiosity, or the forthright sexuality to live in our ideal, where we can be safe MISORs. OR, we push away motherhood, domestic partnership, or comfort, in pursuit of an ideal of being powerful. We push away the MISOR to fully become the MIPE. All women confront the Divide.

Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises that ask the reader to consider how they have doubled down on the role of the MISOR or the MIPE.

- ☆For personal narratives: Describe a time in your life where you felt you had no choice but to reject the role of the sister-self. How did you come to that decision, and how did the choice(s) impact you?
- ☆For writers: How does your character make the decision to reject her sister-self completely? What is she losing in the process? How does the loss affect her decisions?

Chapter 14: Choice & Exchange

If the woman survives abjection, she will have the choice of meeting her sister self, and exchanging powers. In real life, this feels like returning to an earlier version of herself, but with a deeper awareness. This feels like another danger, but is almost sure to end in reconciliation of the two sister selves or sides. In *Legally Blonde*, this moment comes when Elle decides to represent Brooke at her murder trial and realizes that it is her previous life as a MISOR, obsessed with hair and fashion that will save the day. Elle's confidence, that was shaken as she tried to embody the MIPE version of herself, returns in plain view once she is talking about an area that she feels confident about. For Elsa, in *Frozen*, this moment comes when she throws herself around Anna's icy body. It is this act of vulnerability that brings Elsa back to her sister-self, and it is Anna acting in bravery that saves them all. This part of the story, or narrative, is about the sisters, or halves exchanging powers. In a real woman's life, this is the place that is most difficult to feel comfortable in. She has to create a new self with parts of herself that she had buried or thrown out entirely.

Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises that ask the reader what abjected parts are necessary to reconcile the divide. What parts of the sister self have been rejected? What do those parts represent? How does the reader make choices to reintegrate these pieces?

- ☆For personal narratives: What aspect of your own personal abjected sister must you reconnect with? Does this feel possible? Is fear holding you back from this experience? How can you bring those pieces back into your identity safely?
- ☆For writers: What parts of your character's identity will she need to reclaim? What symbolism will you choose for her to make this possible? Will this come about through sacrificing some part of her ego-inflated MIPE or MISOR? Or will it come through some other means? Will she need to make peace with another person?

Chapter 15: Embodiment & Transcendence

In order to fully seal the exchange of powers, the woman must act in a physical way or undergo a physical change. For some women this is a move away from home, or a change in situation. It is most frequently symbolized in a physical change. In *Waitress*, both the film and the broadway version, the main character Jenna goes through labor, giving birth to a daughter. She realizes that she is stronger than she thought, and doesn't need the men in her life anymore. In *Maleficent*, the eponymous character is reunited with her wings. She uses them in battle, fighting simply for the right to exist. In *The Color Purple* it is when Celie defiantly claims her place in the world, standing up for herself, and threatening Mister. Their exchange ends with Celie joining Shug in the car, and giving her speech "I'm poor, black, I may even be ugly, but by God, I'm here". In *Wonder Woman*, it is when Diana realizes that she can use her body's powers to defeat Aries, claiming that the fight is about love, not power. For women, transcendence comes THROUGH *embodiment*. Culture tries to separate women from our bodies. We are shamed for not being modest. We are shamed for being too modest. We are shamed for breast feeding, we are shamed for giving our babies formula. We are shamed for not losing pregnancy

weight fast enough. We are shamed for eating, and for not eating. We are shamed for having sexual desire, and shamed for being frigid. By claiming the body for our own purposes, we act in a revolutionary way. Embodiment is the path to transcendence for women, realizing that they have the power of LIFE, and the first life we have power over is our own.

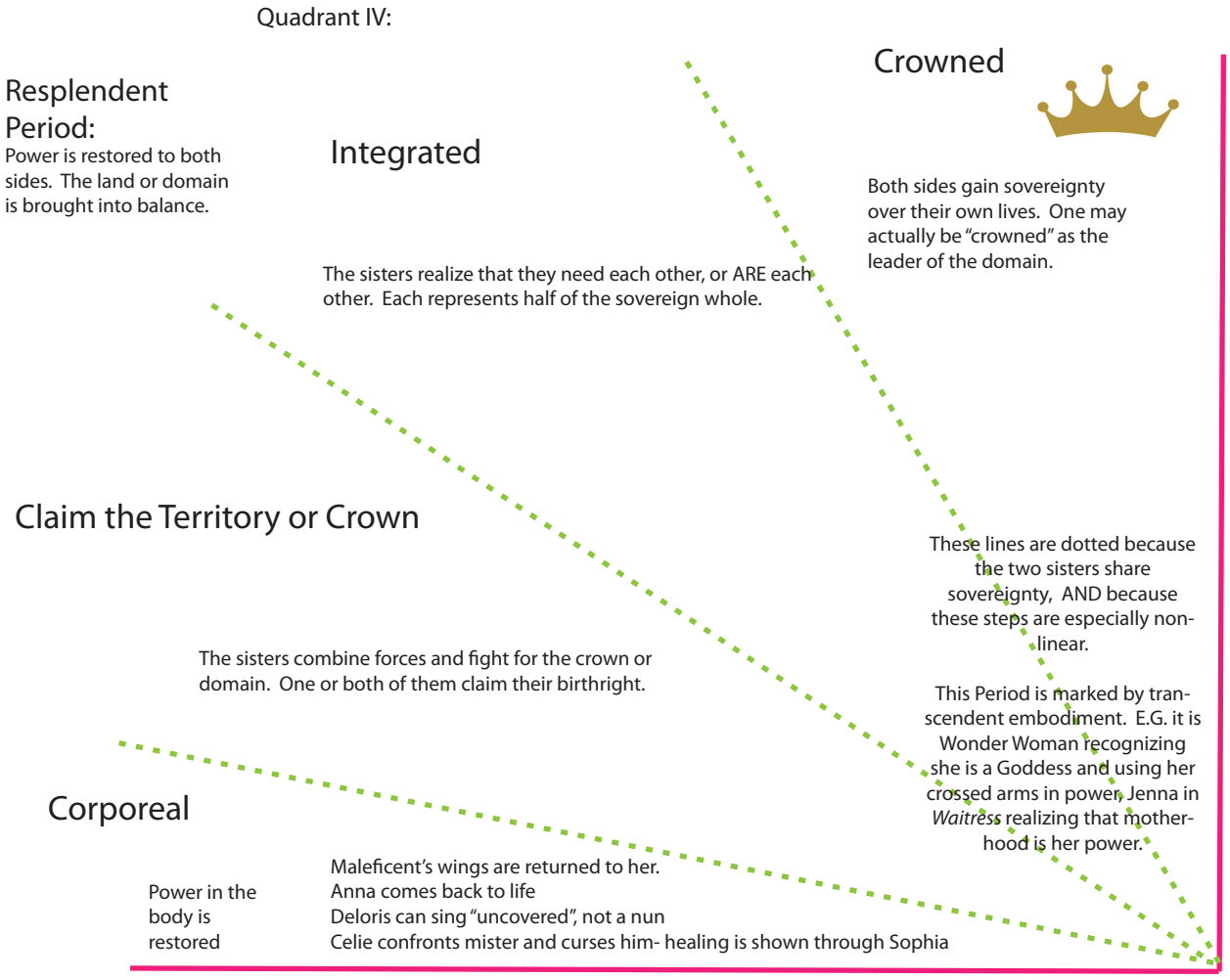
Exercises: The chapter ends with two exercises that ask the reader how their bodies have become symbols of their separation? How then do they use the idea of being "embodied" as a tool of reuniting their divided selves?

- ☆For personal narratives: Where in your body do you feel most powerful? Is there an area where you feel less so? Are these two places connected in some way? If you were to see yourself as EMPOWERED through your body- how would you feel? Is there a superhero costume, or superhero power you would want for yourself? How would you use this power?
- ☆For writers: How does your character's body demonstrate the separation between the two sister selves? How will she use her body for reconnecting the divided parts? This could be in a physical act like having a baby or cooking. Or it could be in dressing a certain way. It could be fighting, singing, speaking, or standing up for herself. How will you connect the divided pieces through this embodied action? What new will emerge as a result?

<u>Section Five: Resplendent</u>

This section of any woman's story, whether real or fictional has the most flexibility. The stages are not there to create a clear path to sovereignty, but rather exist as markers that can ennoble the journey, helping to make the path to self-sovereignty more easily understood. This section is not linear. The diagram of the model marks the pie pieces here with dotted lines to indicate that the sections easily flow in and out with one another. The woman crosses from the

Underworld back into the World of visible power and form. She re-enters the world, but with new powers, and new awareness. She emerges safe from the trials and perils of the depths. She is reunified from the experience of being rendered. The exercises in this section become focused on the "becoming queen".



Chapter 16: Corporeal

This moment allows the woman to reflect on her embodiment. She sees herself embodied, and her power in the physical world becomes evident. This is a moment to underline

the experience of embodiment. This is the moment when the body becomes sacred, holy, re-membered, or elevated. In real life, this is the moment when a woman who has left her husband with great trepidation, looks at the physical work she has done to create a new life for herself, and feels empowered, relieved, and satisfied in her strength. This is the moment in *Wonder Woman* when Diana for the first time realizes that she is a Goddess, and that she is the ONLY one who can destroy Aries. In *Waitress* this is the moment when Jenna is in labor. There are multiple moments in Season 3 of *The Handmaid's Tale*, from the moment that June kills Commander Winslow, to when sacrifices herself in the woods to get the children safely to Canada.

Exercises: The chapter ends with exercises that ask the reader to love and nurture the body. This is the point where being a physical being becomes a sacred identity.

- ☆For personal narratives: What is the most powerful thing you've ever done with your body? If you haven't felt at home in your body, where would you like to build power there, where would the seat of that power be? Your eyes? Your legs? Your hands? Your breasts? If you can't think of an ideal place, explore a bit. Be in dialogue with the parts of your body that you find beautiful, or with the parts that you find challenging. Be kind in this exploration. Your body is the Queen's body, not the body of a servant or subject.
- ☆For writers: How does your character use her body? When she has finally made it through the dangers of the third quadrant, how does this change her physically? Does she look different? Feel different? How does the audience SEE the change?

Chapter 17: Claim the Territory (or Crown)

This part of the story is often the most satisfying, whether in real life, or in a narrative. This is the moment when the woman realizes she belongs. She is surrounded by her people. She

has made a place for herself, or she has successfully defended her territory. She is no longer broken, isolated, or disempowered. This is *The Color Purple's* Celie standing on the porch, surrounded by her family of choice as she looks out to see her sister and children approaching the house. This is the moment in *Wonder Woman* when Diana surrounded by her new friends, reflects on the photograph of her beloved Steve Trevor. It is the moment in the myth of Demeter when she reveals her divinity to the family whose child she has been nursing. It is when Renee in *I Feel Pretty* stands on stage and gets the credit at the make up launch even after realizing that she had seen herself differently, she had never actually "been" different. In *Legally Blonde*, this moment can be seen when Elle Woods descends the stairs of the courtroom surrounded by her tribe. Her ex tries to make up with her, and Elle rejects him, claiming her goals and ambitions for herself alone.

Exercises: The chapter ends with exercises that ask the reader what her territory or domain looks like. Where does she rule? Who are her people? How does she call the people or the place to her? What does it mean to reign in this place?

- ☆For personal narratives: What is your domain? Is it your home? Your family? Maybe it's your job or creative work. Can you draw it as a map? Every queen has a domain that is all hers. She can allow people in if she wants. She also has figured out who her people are. Who are your people? How do you know your tribe when it gathers? How do you recognize one another?
- ☆For writers: How does your character realize that she's not alone? Who are her people? What territory or domain has she taken for herself? This could be a calling, a place, a role, or a career. It doesn't HAVE to be a physical place, but it is easier to understand it if it is associated with one.

Chapter 18: Integrated

This may seem like an obvious culmination of the woman's journey. But it is an important note that needs to be underlined. She must see her integration. She must make the unconscious, conscious. A woman who has undergone the trials and difficulties of the work to integrate the broken pieces of the Divided Woman, MUST do so with awareness. If she does the work without awareness she cannot have sovereignty. Awareness is the key. She must walk into sovereignty fully aware that she has done the work, and that she is a united being, a woman who was cleaved in two as a child, and who through her own work, journey, and embodiment has become whole. We see this in movies symbolically, where the sister selves face one another. In *The Color Purple*, Celie literally faces her sister, Nettie, and one by one, brings each of her children into an embrace, reconnecting the broken pieces of her soul. Her sister "translates" for her, as each broken piece of Celie's life is welcomed, integrating her soul by literally embracing all the pieces. In *Frozen*, this moment comes when Elsa and Anna embrace and Elsa has the realization that "Love will Thaw" with her sister's embrace. In *Legally Blonde*, this moment is when Elle gives the commencement speech at Harvard. She has been chosen by her peers, and she even quotes her professor as an indicator of having pulled in multiple pieces into her new identity. For a real woman, this moment will likely not have the fanfare of movies and stories. Instead, it will be the moment she realizes that she is surrounded by people who love her, and is no longer longing for their approval. She values her own complexity over and above making other people happy or comfortable.

Exercises: The chapter ends with exercises that ask the reader what her integration is about. Throughout the journey of the book have the rendered pieces been identified? What will life look like to reintegrate those fragments? How is she stronger for reconnecting to them?

- ☆For personal narratives: Imagine you are at the last end of your own journey through a forest. The door to the next part of your journey is actually not a door but a mirror. Through it you can see behind you. The mirror is decorated with symbols of your journey. Symbols of the banished sister-self, and the embraced MIPE or MISOR. After looking through the mirror to see the path you have traversed, you realize that moving foreword meanings breaking the mirror. What pieces will you take with you? What pieces of the "other" will require your love and attention to welcome back into your life?
- ☆For writers: What does your character need to integrate, and why? How do you symbolize the broken pieces for her? How will she reclaim the aspects of her MIPE or MISOR self? If there are two characters, it is going to focus on healing the relationship between them. If it is a single-protagonist story, she will need to reclaim aspects of her former self. How do you see this happening for her?

Chapter 19: Crowned

In real life, this moment is similar to the archetypal versions. There is a ritual, a ceremony, a symbolic passing of power. It might be a graduation, or being given the keys to a home or an office. It might come in the form of a big pay day for a project or creative endeavor. In stories and movies, this is the coronation, or another ceremony celebrating her accomplishments. She is often portrayed AS crowned or sovereign. This moment is the physical affirmation of her sovereignty, the experience of the woman having THE say over her body,

mind, well-being, and decision making. No one controls her. No one keeps her from herself anymore. The divide is overcome. The rendered pieces have been reconnected, and healed. The crowning can come as a coronation ceremony like in *Maleficent*. In can come with a graduation with a mortar-board atop her head like in *Legally Blonde*. It can come with a wedding like *In Her Shoes*. It can come with wearing Crown braids like in *The Color Purple*'s end scene when Celie and Nettie are playing "Ma-kee-da-da". It can come when the character changes the world around her, like Jenna buying and renaming the pie restaurant at the end of *Waitress*.

Exercises: The chapter ends with exercises that ask the reader to mark the ascension to her new self. Create or celebrate the taking up of self-sovereignty.

- ☆For personal narratives: How do you wish to mark this change? Is there a ceremony you can engage in with friends or family to claim your crown? Is there a big event coming for you, like a graduation that you can celebrate this with? What about your crown do you LOVE? How can you incorporate that into your ceremony or ritual to celebrate your coronation?
- ☆For writers: What ritual or ceremony can you give your character to make the point of her coronation. It doesn't have to be a coronation explicitly. It can be a wedding, a graduation, a new job, or a vacation. However you represent it, it will connect with audiences if there is something that makes your character feel like a queen, like a crown, a new piece of jewelry, or ownership of something (being given keys for example).

Conclusion:

Women's stories deserve the same archetypal treatment that the Hero's Journey has enjoyed for the last fifty years of psychological analysis and storytelling. Women have our own monomyth, and while we still live in a patriarchal society, this structure helps us to organize our

women's narratives. When we have moved beyond patriarchy we will need a new model. Perhaps this new model will ask us very different questions. But for now, women are finally free to be the Queens of their own lives. We have a path to trod that explores our experiences, our dreams, our gifts, and our struggles. No two women's footsteps along the path are the same. But every woman can relate to the journey.

The Market

Characteristics:

The audience for this book is college educated women who are interested in women's issues, especially mothers of daughters. Following the Women's March on Washington, it is for those women around the world who marched to celebrate their sovereignty, and to assure its place in the world. This book is a guide for, and a celebration of them. It is also a response to *The Hero's Journey* as defined by Joseph Campbell, offering an alternative narrative for women and for writers who create women's stories and women characters.

Motivations:

The primary audience for this book is made up of women who have experienced the let-down of the Divided Woman, but who have been unable to identify it. They feel that the roles as they are currently defined for women are not illustrative of their experience. They long for a description that encapsulates their WHOLE identity. THE QUEEN'S PATH offers a definition of that experience, and contextualizes it in terms of a long, cultural and archetypal narrative that can be illustrated in stories and mythologies from *Genesis* to *Wicked*.

Competition

It has been many years since the publication of the *Power of Myth* by Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers. That book and the accompanying PBS special brought attention to the work of Joseph Campbell, especially the archetypal model known as the Hero's Journey. Since its publication, there have been few responses to the focus on the journey being identified primarily with men's lives. While elements of the Hero's Journey are present for some women, (The Call, The Trial, The Return…), there are other aspects that don't often turn up in the stories of women, and those focus on the roles of women as they try to navigate their identity, while fitting into very narrow cultural definitions of acceptable archetypes. If I were writing in the late 1980's or early 1990's my primary competition would be *The Power of Myth*, and *Women Who Run with the Wolves*. There hasn't been a book about archetypes in the popular discourse for a while, so the primary competition will be for attention with books on women's issues, and spiritual/self-help books.

Examples:

- *My Life on the Road* by Gloria Steinem
- *Untamed* by Glennon Doyle Melton
- *We Should All Be Feminists* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead* by Brené Brown
- *Better Than Before: What I Learned about Making and Breaking Habits* by Gretchen Rubin
- *Queen of Your Own Life* by Cindy Ratzlaff & Kathy Kinney
- *Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear* by Elizabeth Gilbert
- *The Universe has Your Back* by Gabrielle Bernstein

- *The Making of Biblical Womanhood* by Beth Allison Barr
- *Archetypes* by Caroline Myss

The Author

I have a PhD with a focus on social psychology and the media. My PhD research focused on how moral panics emerge in communities, and how the accused perpetrators are represented in the media. My academic career united a background in film and television production with a mandate from the Governor's office that Louisiana State University develop a new economic sector in high performance computing. My contribution was to unite the ambitions of the Governor's mandate for a new Louisiana economic sector with the policies, symbols, and programs that the legislature and the electorate could connect with- the entertainment products that they consumed, but could not yet produce. In my time at LSU my contributions initiated legislation for developing new sectors in entertainment: video game development, animation, and film production, especially post production and visual effects. In addition, thousands of high school students experienced an updated curriculum to prepare them for jobs in these sectors as a direct result of my efforts to expand the capacity of what schools, parents, and districts thought could be possible.

I have worked in or around the studio system for more than two decades. I founded The Red Stick International Animation Festival, which from 2004-2010 was the largest in the US. I co-founded the Animation, Visualization, Arts, Technology and Research (AVATAR) Program at Louisiana State University, which is now among the top ten programs of its kind in the United States. I won a governor's technology leader of the year award for bringing animation, video

game technologies, and technical film programs and projects to the state of Louisiana. I have toured and talked about animation and film at schools, trade shows, and communities all over the world.

I was named in *Fast Company Magazine's 100 Most Creative People* in Business for my contributions to distance learning, a project that began with research at LSU. My work to advance the work of women and underrepresented groups in animation and entertainment has included participation in women's groups and professional organizations including presenting at conferences, working with Women in Animation, creating an educational program and competition for high school students across Louisiana, and engaging in meaningful research projects around women's participation. I've also made significant contributions assisting individual women animators and filmmakers expand their professional skills and options.

My own journey into the world of depth psychology began when I was at LSU. As I became more and more frustrated by the up hill climb in academia, I became deeply disillusioned. By 2007 I found myself suffering from debilitating sleep disturbances. I had nightly intrusions from disturbing dreams, night terrors, and nightmares. I began a difficult and painful personal analysis that revealed that I was constantly at odds with myself. I tried to balance the world of my ambitions with the roles that were placed before me. They could never meet. As soon as I would enjoy some achievement, there was a hindrance, or an injury added to the success.

I left LSU after eight years of very successful fund-raising, grant-development, program creation, and public awareness. Despite the successes I had there, I felt empty and beaten down. I returned to Los Angeles, and through a series of synchronicities found myself studying to become a therapist at Pacifica Graduate Institute in 2013. I had dedicated myself to my own

psychoanalysis since 2008, uncovering and identifying the broken pieces of myself. But nothing prepared me for what happened when I arrived on the Pacifica Campus. My nightmares and dreams STOPPED. They just stopped. I was no longer haunted. I was able to sleep through the night. My psyche took a deep breath, and began to assimilate, and then integrate, all the broken pieces of myself that had been chipped away along my own journey as a Divided Woman.

I earned a Master's in Psychology with a concentration in Depth Psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute, where my thesis focused on the portrayal of women in family films. It was in this research that I first formerly encountered the Divided Woman as an archetypal force. I was fascinated with the changes in how women characters were portrayed across the Disney feature animation filmography. For my thesis I wanted to explore what appeared to be an increase in agency for women characters incrementally over the eighty or so years since *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937). While I still want to do that research, I focused my research on one aspect of this archetype, the Divided Woman, for my thesis. Since completing that master's degree in 2016 I have been refining this model, presenting it at conferences, talking to women's groups about it, and discussing it with depth psychologists and mythologists.

Since completing my master's at Pacifica I have found my niche as a therapist. I work primarily with creative professionals. Directors, actors, writers, musicians, come to my practice to work on their own divides, and on their experiences with impostor syndrome. This work is deeply satisfying, and has offered me my own Queenly domain. I enjoy more agency, personal power, and self-acceptance in finding my own personal path to satisfaction and sovereignty. I am no longer tortured by dreams, nightmares, or a constant internal nagging that I am not good enough, or that my work is in service only to the Divide.

I write analyses of popular woman characters on my blog at writewomen.com. I also have contributed articles to the Shondaland website, and to SacredEarth.church. I also am preparing an article on the Divided Woman for *Feminism and Religion.* I have very successfully changed perceptions of challenging topics (High Performance Computing, CGI Animation, Film finance) in my career. In my second career as a therapist I break down challenging archetypal ideas on a daily basis. I am well prepared to take this information to a broader audience. While I have never written a book for publication, I have written a thesis and a doctoral dissertation.

I also have presented this information at several conferences for writers, mythologists, and women who are working on personal development issues. Everywhere I have presented this material it has been well-received, with dozens of questions and email relationships begun as a result. I have also shared this information with some former studio colleagues, and have been asked to consult on everything from feature film scripts to children's television series.

Characteristics:

The audience for this book is college educated women who are interested in women's issues, especially mothers of daughters. Following the Women's March on Washington, it is for those women around the world who marched to celebrate their sovereignty, and to assure its place in the world. This book is a guide for, and a celebration of them. It is also a response to *The Hero's Journey* as defined by Joseph Campbell, offering an alternative narrative for women and for writers who create women's stories and women characters.

Motivations:

The primary audience for this book is made up of women who have experienced the feeling that the roles defined for women are not illustrative of their experience of their own

WHOLE identity. It offers a definition of that experience, and contextualizes it in terms of a long, cultural and archetypal narrative that can be illustrated in stories and mythologies from *Genesis* to *Wicked*.

Affinity Groups:

- Women who participated in Women's Marches around the world.
- Subscribers to and followers of Marie Forleo's MarieTV
- Subscribers of *O Magazine*
- Readers of books by Gretchen Rubin
- Readers of books by Brené Brown
- Readers of books and blog of Glennon Doyle Menton
- Viewers of TED talks, especially those about women or story
- Readers of books by Marion Woodman
- Readers of books by Jean Shinoda Bolen
- Writers who read books on the Hero's Journey
- Readers of books by Chris Vogler
- Readers of Beth Allison Barr's *The Making of Biblical Womanhood*

Manuscript

I expect the manuscript to be approximately 200,000 words. It will include images and graphics from film and television, and possibly some song lyrics. It will be delivered in sections that correspond to the graph of the Queen's Path included above. There is the potential to include an appendix where one or two films, television series, or novels are broken down according to the model of the Queen's Path.

Sample Chapters

Introduction: The World is Run by Archetypes

What's in an Archetype?

The world is filled with archetypes. A day doesn't pass where we aren't assailed by at least one archetype or symbol. In my therapy practice, these structures parade in and out of my clients' sessions, most days without a moment's recognition. Archetypes hold our most cherished ideals. They tell us who we are, and who we wish to be. Most often archetypes come to us from a cultural perspective. We learn them from our parents, our pastors, and our favorite stories. We take the archetype on, aligning with it, investing in it. We take on the symbols associated with it. Our savior archetype becomes Jesus, our deified salvation. Our mother archetype becomes the Madonna, Demeter, or KwanYin. When we struggle, we compare ourselves or the people around us to ideals that we mistakenly label "normal". The word itself means "old type." But an archetype is so much more than just an arcane model of something. An archetype is a collection of behaviors and qualities seen and experienced together repetitively across cultures. Usually these are personifications, but not always.

My world in the last several years has been punctuated by the work of some famous psychologists and mythologists, all dedicated to archetypal models in one form or another. Joseph Campbell, Carl G. Jung, Marie-Louise von Franz, James Hillman, and Marion Woodman, all wrote and spoke about archetypes as structures that occupy a psychological space in both culture and the individual psyche. We don't make archetypes up, they are always there. At different times in our history certain archetypes are favored over others, and they take up more of our intellectual and psychological attention. Archetypes in one form or another have been known

to us since the time of Plato's *Forms*. Most of the time we are unaware of these archetypal powers and their influence on us, and yet we see them, reproduce them, and create expectations of ourselves and others based on their prominence in our cultures, families, and our own individual expectations.

We are probably most familiar with a related concept, a stereotype. A stereotype is a reduction of an idea into its most basic or culturally understandable form. Often stereotypes are negative because anytime you overly simplify something you run the risk of reducing it to its most base attributes. Archetypes are similar, but the word itself suggests that the form you are looking at holds meaning and structures across a longer period of time. Archetypes also carry the possibility of deep meaning, and so are often (though not always) expected to hold the "ideal" versions of the type.

Cultures build their expectations for how we behave on archetypal patterns. Every culture has a hero archetype for example, though the individual hero may be different. He might be Achilles in Greece, Ogun in West Africa, or King Arthur in Medieval Europe. Every culture has a Goddess of Love, whether she is Oshun in West Africa, Aphrodite in Greece, Erzulie in Haiti, or the Madonna in Western Christianity. An archetype carries the expectations of the culture. We place meaning in the archetype, and use it as a touchstone for understanding ideals. Sometimes an archetype has a negative association, like a villain, a ghost, or embodied evil like a devil or demon. Archetypes always hold multiple levels of meaning, and they can cross cultural boundaries because they are not named and associated with any given place or culture.

When you think of the Father Archetype, for example, you will likely have a powerful, strong, guiding, sometimes dominating idea of what "Father" should be. When you think of the "Mother" you probably think of kindness, loving support, nurturing, and warmth. When you think of a Warrior Archetype, you probably see some attributes of male, brave, honor, and ferocity. If you experienced anything different than archetypal behavior in your own life, then you likely compared that behavior to an archetype. For example, as a psychotherapist, I see many clients who have experienced less than ideal parenting. It is a rare thing that my clients do NOT compare their experience against an ideal. It usually goes something like, "Why couldn't I just have *normal* parents?" or "Why did I have to have *this* experience? Why couldn't I just have a *normal* family?" What they are actually sad about is how far from the ideal their experience was. My answer is almost always the same. There is no normal. There is ideal, and then there is how we realize the ideal in ourselves and our experiences. Most people cannot withstand the pressure of how they measure up to their ideals. In retaliation, they push against anyone or anything that reminds them of these failings, rather than examine those archetypal expectations. This is a painful, but avoidable reality. Successfully navigating the space between the archetypal ideal and lived reality can be difficult, but it is the best way I know for building a happy life. In order to be capable of that negotiation though, you have to first be able to identify the archetypes at work in your psyche, your world, and in your relationships.

The Gendered Soul in Culture

We welcome children into the world with a sense of great joy. The entry of the new soul into our lives is seen as a gift from an unknown realm into the *terra firma* we see every day. The new person is not a zombie or a golem awaiting a soul's arrival. The soul is here, with the

newborn, becoming itself, divine potential unfolding into flesh. Until the threshold of puberty, all children share a cultural identification with innocence. This is an unfair attribution, one that associates secondary sex characteristics with sexuality and gendered behavior, and thus with corruption.

Around the age of eight or nine we start to expect girls to “act like a lady” and for boys to act “tough” or “man up”. In both sexes, their appearance is judged. Children at this age start to identify with characters in games, movies, or television. Also around this age, children begin to place themselves in the hierarchy according to the expectations and behavior of their family members. For men, the transition from boyhood moves the innocent child into a track ascending from innocence to power. For women, this movement away from innocence gives women two prescribed options: move into social acceptance or social isolation. Acceptance is associated with being protected, and the other is associated with having personal power but being isolated.

Sex and gender, are complex issues. Sex is what you are born with. Gender is what you perform in the world. In many cultures, these two are conflated, and any difference between the two is treated with disdain at the very least, and violence at the very worst. Cultural issues around sex and gender are complicated, mostly because of this conflation. When we can separate out the cultural aspects of gender from the biological issues of sex, we often find ourselves with more tolerant laws, cultural norms, and robust structures more supportive of all people. When structures reinforce the connection between sex and gender, we often find that cultures and social structures are more rigid. People are expected to stay in their gendered lane, according to their biological sex. This can make many people feel more restricted, and while it may make people

with traditional expectations of sex roles feel safe, it makes anyone outside of those norms, who may deviate even a little, feel disempowered and at risk.

The performance of gender according to traditional sex roles is at the core of many conservative cultural norms. These inform everything from stereotypes of what is considered feminine and masculine behavior, as well as archetypal ideals of motherhood, fatherhood, marriage, family, and ideal work. There are dozens of models of female expectations we can examine: mother, whore, lover, witch, spinster, wife, secretary, nag; there are new ones that have entered our lexicon as well: bitch, angry black woman, nasty woman, Karen… When working in any realm where we are interacting with other people, archetypes will be alive in the discussion.

The tumult over Hillary Clinton's emails and the general view of her as "untrustworthy" in the 2016 elections wasn't about her as an individual, it was about her alignment with an archetype. She was a "bitch" a "feminist". She didn't know her place. It wasn't just that she had an opinion, it was that her husband cheated. The implication was that even her husband didn't want to have sex with her because she was too opinionated, and that this lack of submission was unattractive, undesirable, and unwomanly.

The more a group is vilified or subverted in society, the more the representation of that group will be dominated by archetypes and stereotypes. Similarly, if a group is losing ground in society, it will latch onto stereotypes and archetypes as easy simplifications of good and evil in order to make their message more clear, and their cause more plain. Complexity ceases to be possible in the face of archetypes and stereotypes. Archetypes typically are expansive of set of conditions or qualities, and stereotypes narrow it. Archetypes traverse cultures, where as

stereotypes often are limited to the society or culture that adopts them. Stereotypes can of course be transmitted across cultures, typically they don't expand the categories as they do so.

Symbols are the next step in cultural explanations. Archetypes tend to create categories, for example, every culture has a savior archetype, a mother archetype, and a father archetype. The culture will assign a symbol to this archetype in order to connect with it, and make meaning. In the West, Luke Skywalker is a contemporary hero. Luke is the symbol, hero is his archetype. In the 2016 election, Hillary was the symbol, bitch was her archetype. She has another, the MIPE, an archetype we will dive more into as we traverse the landscape covered in this book.

Recent History and the Hero

The Hero's Journey has become one of the most important archetypal stories of the last century. It has been used in historical analyses to examine how great men and women of history have made their way in the world. It has been used in psychology to help people navigate the travails of life. It has been used in literature to help codify what makes a good story. This complex archetypal pattern examines the hero's life cycle as he traverses the realm of life from being called out of the wilderness of the unconscious and into a life of purpose. In the traditional structure, the hero is called to his purpose, he refuses the call, he is pulled, meets a teacher, goes on a quest, gives up or loses something important, learns something transformational, and ends up returning to the place of origin to share his wisdom. Traditionally there are seventeen or more steps along the hero's journey.

Joseph Campbell was the first to identify the hero's journey by examining myths that had been passed down across time through multiple cultures. Culture makers have relied on this structure to give us our history, help us make sense of our present, and build a framework for our

future. But the framework has never been robust enough to also hold the story of women's lived experience. Women's lives include decisions and experiences that are relatively universal to women, but that the hero on his journey never has to confront. The hero never has to struggle with whether or not he is culturally acceptable based on his looks, or has to deal with life and death issues that focus on marriageability, virginity, and fertility, for example. As a result, the hero's journey has been insufficient to contextualize the paths of women.

The hero's journey cannot fully hold the space of women's struggle with these realities. It cannot precisely reconcile the forces that push women into a singular identity that is almost always a reduction of the whole self, balancing the demands of desire and motherhood, and the powerful role women struggle with in being the channel of life for the continuation of humanity. The different stops and struggles along the hero's journey don't include these aspects, and they cannot, for the hero's journey tells the story of men. Men's journeys usually don't preclude whether or not they are fathers, at least not archetypally. Whether or not a man gets married does not fundamentally change the arc of his story from a cultural perspective. No one assumes a married man has a different path to becoming a lawyer, banker, adventuring archaeologist, or Pulitzer Prize winning writer than a single man. That is a very different calculus for women.

For a woman to be on a hero's journey she must have already taken on the mantle of "outsider". Before she even begins that journey, she has had to navigate the Queen's Path. The traditional hero's journey does not address how women navigate the world of reconciling multiple identities, some of which are compromised in culture, others empowered, and all of which are subject to cultural, gendered norms that assume women are subjects. If the ideal of the hero archetype is always male, then a female hero will always be second to the male hero, at

least archetypally. So from a cultural perspective, it doesn't matter if a woman is the hero of her own story, her story will always be less important in culture to a similar man's story. A female hero is almost always seen as an outsider at best, and an impostor at worst.

Women know this, and most of us are uneasy about it. We know at the core of who we are that there is nothing about our identity or our work that is less valuable. And yet, simultaneously, day after day, we are faced with the evidence of men's work being given more attention, more money, more credibility, and thus, more value. We know that this is a constructed reality, not a reality borne of anything more than behavior that is reinforced by a system perpetuating itself.

The domination of male story patterns in our culture is constantly produced and reproduced. Cultures continue to repeat the Hero's Journey as an organizing principle found in sacred texts, fairy tales, and cultural myths. We find this structure in film, novels, and television. You'll find it in comic book heroes like Superman and Batman. You'll also see it in sacred literature from the Torah, to the Gospels, to the Upanishads. Psychologists use it as an organizing principle to help people make meaning in their lives by reframing the client as a hero navigating through their own hero's journey. Joseph Campbell called this a "monomyth". In that terminology he intentionally put the Hero's Journey forth as a universal story structure for everyone. Except, he didn't include women.

Women have our own archetypal structure, or monomyth. Our journeys have to include the impact of the patriarchy, as well as the way of overcoming it. I know many of my feminist colleagues see the world as rooted in patterns of greater usurpation of power and violence. I don't disagree with these points of view. Women's lives are mediated and punctuated by violence

in ways that culture does its best to sweep under the rug or normalize. However, I don't think that at this particular moment, addressing the problem from the point of view of women as victims is the most strategic.

Women are changing the world. We can make these change for ourselves, for our children, and for men. First though, we have to tell our own stories. That begins with an archetypal journey that focuses on women's experiences, not one that adapts a man's monomyth, trying to force a woman to ignore the cultural, social, familial, and biological forces that make her care about her role, her destiny, and her legacy. She is a queen, and by reclaiming her rights to her journey, she can remake the world. Like the pieces on the chessboard, the queen has more power, more maneuverability, and more flexibility. She moves in ways that kings, bishops, and soldiers cannot. If she can learn to see the game, and break it, she can claim a territory for herself, that prior to this moment in time had only been available to a king.

Chapter One

Women in Captivity: Introduction to the Worlds and Quadrants

Women are one half the world's population. And yet the world is hardly fair to us. We struggle with empowerment, but anyone selling something wants our money. Culture doesn't want us to own our sexuality, and yet we are expected to put it on display for everyone to comment upon. Life constantly tells women who to be, how to be it, and what's wrong with us. And then turns around and tells us to just "lean in" to the challenges we face. To understand ourselves, women must first look not only at our own hopes, dreams, and fears, but also the systems in which we operate and try to realize those same desires and ambitions.

This book is about women. It is about women as we are taught to be, and who we can become when we look beyond the options given to us. The path that women wind down is not a linear journey, but instead an ever-turning spiral, one where we are regularly engaging the same events, from different vantage points. To know women is to understand the complexities that women endure. Most of us fight the entangled stories and histories, looking for simple, elegant narratives. We long to be the one that we were instructed to be: thin, powerful, in control, beautiful, brilliant, and effortless. The ideal of womanhood has become an archetype so far from what is attainable, that women ultimately reject the ideal in favor of the possible. Most of us live saddened by that, or downright ashamed. No one seems to question whether these binary choices are good for anyone, or if they are based in a system of oppression.

The story of the queen archetype, and the worlds that she moves through are complex, AND elegant. Decoding the queen archetype was only possible because there has been so much change in recent years. Women hold important positions in government, the media, academia,

and business. This work is the culmination of years of research. The model described in these pages appears in story after story, regardless of the medium being employed to tell it. The model is intuitive; writers have been reproducing it for millennia. You will find the Queen and her model in everything from ancient Sumerian myths, to the *Hebrew Bible*, all the way to the present day in movies like *Frozen*, and television series like *The Handmaid's Tale* or *The Nevers*.

I have worked in and around entertainment most of my career, so it is natural for me to most easily find the examples of these elements in movies and television. Inevitably though the same elements appear in any stories women tell. I find it daily in my psychotherapy practice. Reproduction of this model is true whether the person telling the story is a woman talking to her best friend, or an Oscar-winning screenwriter writing the next superhero film. Whether authors, historians, screenwriters, or individual women intend to follow the archetypal path or not, it traverses us as much as we walk it. As we go through the steps along the Queen's Path, there are some familiar and unfamiliar paths we will wander onto.

I am asked frequently if I am writing a woman's version of The Hero's or Heroine's Journey. This is a difficult question to answer. It would not have been possible for me to recognize the steps of the Queen's Path without the work of Joseph Campbell, Chris Vogler, Carole Pearson, and Maureen Murdock. However, I disagree with my esteemed colleagues Pearson and Murdock on the arcs that they describe. There are similarities between the Hero's Journey, the Heroine's Journey, and the Path of the Queen. But I found my model by analyzing all kinds of narratives, from fairy tales, and films to personal stories from my psychotherapy patients. I broke down the key elements long ***before*** comparing them to the work of other authors and researchers.

The biggest difference for me is that in the Queen's Path, the woman herself ultimately has to decide HOW she will combat the cultural expectations placed on her. These constraints are structural to her journey, in ways that they are not for a hero. Her path is marked by the individual woman's, or female character's struggle with predefined categories put on women by culture or society. It is up to her to ultimately decide her own fate, and come to terms with her own agency, (expressed as sovereignty), in a world that would prefer that she fit into easy tropes that either keep her small and docile, or punish her for becoming big and powerful. The Path of the Queen denies that these tropes are the only options for her, but in order to overcome them, she must work *through* them. She cannot ignore them. The Queen overcomes these binary choices, becoming whatever version of herself is the most sovereign truth for her to run her own life according to her ideals, goals, ambitions, gifts, and talents.

Not a Heroine's Journey

A Queen doesn't take a Hero's Journey. That's not to say that some women don't take hero's journeys, and that there aren't rare men who take the Path of the Queen. The Queen's Path more accurately describes what women face in a patriarchal society. No one asks Clark Kent if his job at *The Daily Planet* will interfere with the expectation that he will want to marry and have children. No one tells Indiana Jones that in order to "have it all" he will have to sacrifice his masculinity and be better than, and subtly flirt with, the women at the university where he is a professor. No one tells Frodo that he needs to "Lean In" to the troubles befalling him, and be a better version than the female hobbits as he gets on the road to Mordor. No, as we read these

stories or watch these characters' stories unfold, the assumption is that these male protagonists are already expected to be on a rarefied journey, simply by being called to the quest.

We describe the quest in inherently male terms most of the time. Female characters have simultaneously been dissuaded from these quests, and also subsumed in them. People are often uncomfortable saying that women are qualitatively *different* from men, and yet that is exactly how we are portrayed in a telling of the heroine's journey. You will find descriptions where she eschews all that makes her feminine in order to be on the heroine's journey, taking on increasingly male roles and attributes. You will also find descriptions of the heroine's journey aligning her with a path through the underworld where she meets a Goddess or God, and then ONLY a supernatural encounter can ultimately free her. The problem with these descriptions is that the path of the female character in these stories is in relationship to a male protagonist, a presumed male experience, or to an assumed weakness of her sex. Women, whether they are real-live women, or female characters in stories, do not exist only in relationship to a man or to maleness.

The Queen's Path acknowledges that all women have to confront society's expectations of what women ARE. Individuality has been much more difficult for women to assert over the millennia. Each individual woman has to move through the realization that we are given a role. The reality of being a woman, is that more than anything, culture (and by extension, jobs, families, spouses, and children) want us to fit the archetypal models more than they want us to be individuals. We hold ourselves to those ideals as well. It is not at all difficult see that the system of expectations will easily consume our individuality to feed the machine of culture.

The struggle for women is that along the Queen's Path we have to separate from the expectations of society. Before we can find ourselves at the end, defining our domain, being sovereign, we must first recognize the separation- the experience of being divided. Ultimately we are expected to align ourselves within a set of parallel expectations. The possibilities for women are usually limited- we are "good" or "bad girls"; "heroines" or "ladies"; "madonnas" or "whores". All of these are false dichotomies. Women cannot free ourselves from them without realizing that they are not handed to us as *personal expectations*. We must recognize that these are handed to us as uniforms that we are expected to inhabit throughout the course of our lives.

Society has attempted to make the story of women's lives about these polarities, attempting to force women into one of two damning choices. Either you are a "typical" woman, or you are an "atypical" woman. You either love dolls and makeup, or you abandon them in an effort to be more *masculine*. You're either an ideal female, or by default, masculine. These binary choices are not representative of real women's lives. Nor are they representative of the characters' lives in novels, television, films, or sacred literature. How women navigate the complex performance of gender is only one aspect of women's lives. And yet, most storytelling models fall into these descriptions because it is the most simple and acceptable representation of women.

Having said all of that, to ignore the struggle of women and the far more complicated expectations placed on us by society, our families, and sometimes ourselves, is to avoid the internal and external conflicts women face in the endeavor of becoming whole. As children we learn the expectations, and struggle with how to break free of those structural chains. We learn very early the cost of being born into a female body. Most women struggle with these identities

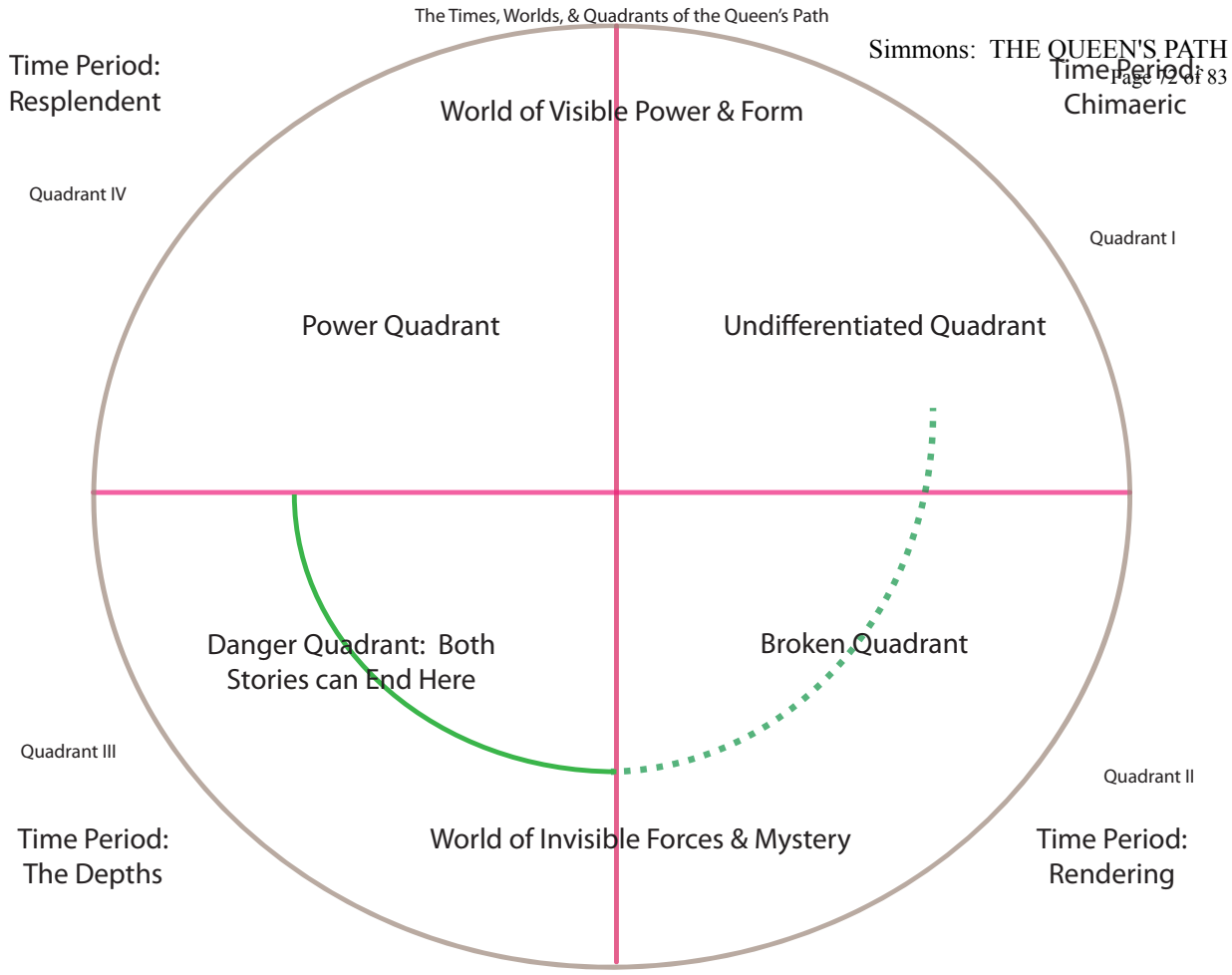
for the majority of our lives. The difference in the Queen's Path is that the model illuminates the expectations placed on the individual woman, and also reveals the way to overcome the expectations in favor of her deliverance. She unfolds as a sovereign being enjoying the full liberty of her own humanity.

The Queen's Path is a model that illuminates the path for women who wish to overcome the choices handed to us as early in our lives. It teaches women that we have the ability, power, and agency to make our own choices, even in a world that attempts to constrain our identities and reduce our autonomy via biological determinism. The Queen's Path is a guide to write our own endings, and to guide writers to create women characters who more closely adhere to women's lived experience.

The Queen's Path: the Worlds, and the Time Periods

In most stories, we aren't paying very close attention to the where and the time that things are happening in the character's universe. We do care about setting, and about the plot. But that the character is at the end of high school or about to start a new job are usually context. If a woman is in the midst of a career change, or is struggling to raise her children, is not usually the focus of how her internal struggle is portrayed, whether in the stories or in the personal narratives of real women.

In my therapy practice individual women focus primarily on what they can DO. These patients often come into their first appointment believing something is "wrong" with them. They almost always come into therapy to "fix" something that they think will make the important people in their lives: like them more, believe in them more, communicate with them better, or love them more deeply. Popular stories focus on how a character finds herself. Is she pretty? Fat?



Is she too smart? Is she awkward? But in thinking archetypally we have to think about where things happen, and when they happen. Every story has a structure. Most stories follow a formula that is familiar so that the reader or the audience can feel comfortable in the story.

The first part of the story structure in the Queen's Path is the "world" structure. This isn't the setting of the story, though that is important, and if we weren't speaking of archetypes, the subject of worlds in story would be a very different discussion. Archetypally, the world is a fixed thing in this story structure. It is reflective of the roles that the person, or character is experiencing. Where in HER psyche does the journey take her? Where does she begin? In which aspect of the archetypal world does the story commence? Do we meet our protagonist as she is starting a new life in New York City after a divorce? After college? These place her on the

Queen's Path in a specific way. Is a new psychotherapy patient seeking support because of a divorce? Is she starting a new career? Maybe she has moved across the country and is feeling alone. All of these help us to understand where in the Queen's Path we are.

In our journey the woman begins in the world of power and form. If you look at Figure 1, You will see that the World of Visible Power & Form is the upper half of the circle. Her journey begins in the upper right quadrant. Look at the circle as though it is a clock face. The journey begins in the Undifferentiated Quadrant, which is in the World of Visible Power and Form. It is like starting the journey at midnight, and moving towards one.

The World of Visible Power and Form

The upper two quadrants, Quadrant I and Quadrant IV make up the visible world. They are the world you can see, the world of decisions and direct action. This is the world of the every day. The world of power, where there are clear hierarchies. The world of the beginning and the end, where everything makes sense. You may have heard of something similar in regards to the Hero's Journey where the hero has to leave the "everyday world". While there is an element of that here, it is not the same. In the World of Visible Power and Form, the woman sees the systems that operate around her. In the first quadrant, she is inside of these systems, but doesn't understand it, or carry any awareness. She is undifferentiated. In the fourth quadrant, after her cycle through the path is complete, she has become differentiated and has overcome the divided self. She has become a queen, meaning that in the world of visible power and form, she has emerged with self-sovereignty. She has power in the world of visible power and form. She owns her domain, and doesn't have to fight against the structures of culture, family, or role-bound expectations. She is free.

Quadrant One: Chimaeric Time

Look at the diagram as though you were reading the face of a clock. The first quadrant falls between twelve and three, that's Quadrant One. It is appropriate to draw the analogy of a clock, because this is the earliest part of the story. It is the place where the character herself is undifferentiated. She is unaware of what is about to begin. It has not occurred to her that she is about to be forced into a lane, the same way that all women are forced into one of two archetypal identities (more on that later). She may see the divide, and think it doesn't apply to her. She may be a child and unaware that these forces are at work.

Usually a character in a story in this part of the cycle is a child. This may be in the character's past, a part of her back story. In the first quadrant writers need to know what their character's life was like before she was forced into, or chose her lane. For women, they can look back at their own lives and see the time of their innocence. The lanes will become evident as we go through the discussions over the course of this book. In this diagram the lanes women are forced into are marked by the dotted green line, and then a solid green line. All women, whether in fiction or in real life, face this divide. The woman in the first quadrant is called undifferentiated, and the time is called chimaeric, because she has only a glimpse of the divide, anything is possible. She doesn't live with the divide as her everyday struggle. It is the chimaeric quadrant because she is pure potential. She believes she can be or do anything.

She is not whole, to be whole you have to have awareness. That is why "undifferentiated" is the appropriate descriptor. She knows her potential, she belongs to her family or tribe, or she has some gift that she knows is there. She does not know how to use her gifts. She doesn't know

that the place around her is safe (or unsafe). She doesn't yet know what choices the world will put in front of her.

I often see women in my therapy practice who want to skip from quadrant one to quadrant four. They (rightfully) fear the underworld of the journey and the mystery they will encounter there. But there can be no power acquired or goal achieved without traversing the unknown. There can be no self sovereignty without confronting the restrictions of culture and family. There can be no form without mystery, no power without conflict, no success without awareness. And there can be no United Queen without their first being a Divided Woman.

Divide et Impera -Divide and Rule (Over)

In his most famous work on politics, *The Prince*, Niccolò Machiavelli spoke of the "Mathematical Sense", a strategy of war first made known by the Greek King, Phillip of Macedonia. Machiavelli called it: *divide et impera,* better known to us in English as "Divide and Conquer". The words have become hollow after centuries of use, and we have become somewhat detached from their deepest and most nuanced meaning. In the current political climate, we see it in the division of people into factions, and our efforts to maintain our ties within groups based on excising members who do not meet standards of purity.

Divide and Conquer has become an easy trope. The original translation of *Divide et Impera* is not the simple "Divide and Conquer" that we have come to associate with political parties and factions at the PTA. No, the original meaning is a lot more sinister. The term means to separate or faction, and then compel by force the divided parts to the point of their knowing no other command. When discussing a conquered people, they are threatened into fear for their lives and resources. If you are talking about an individual– to be divided in this way means literally to

split someone's psyche against itself. The *Impera* part, means that the person being divided doesn't own herself. She gives up her own sovereignty to the "rule" of someone else. The divided woman then is internally compelled by the person ruling over her. It means to make the woman doubt her own internal thoughts in favor of the culture (or individual) that tells her she is not allowed her own power. The person herself does not own her *Impera* (her own will or drive). She is subject to whoever rules over her. As we will see as we continue, every woman is a divided woman.

Every woman's story begins with her moving from undifferentiated to divided. She is a little girl, and she may play with boys. She may climb trees, or play with dolls, or both. The undifferentiated period of a woman's life is defined by her being unaware of what is coming. She does not really understand that there is something on the horizon that will constrain her. She doesn't know that she will face a series of events that will divide her and force her into a lane of behaving a certain way for the majority of her life. The story of the divided woman has not been out in the open in a conscious way. Like most things in the lives of women, it is has been hidden in plain sight.

These masked parts of the story allow the belief to invade each individual woman's psyche that some of the story, (especially the parts that are most painful) are within her control. But while her individual incarnation of the story is personal, the path it traverses is archetypal. Female characters are just as susceptible to this reality as real-life women. It doesn't mean that every character will be plagued by doubt. Women can be confident, villainous, or sociopathic too. But all women fall into the divide. And the first critical aspect of the divide is ***hiding it***. Part

of keeping women in darkness, is making us believe that *we created* the divide for ourselves.

Some of these internal messages may be familiar:

- If I had been stronger, I would not have been abused.
- If I had stood up for myself, they wouldn't have treated me this way.
- If I just can find the time to work harder, I'll be able to catch up and show them my value.
- If I weren't a pushover, s/he wouldn't get away with this.
- If I were prettier, I wouldn't feel this way.
- If I were smarter, I wouldn't be in this mess.
- If I were….(insert adjective here)… I would/wouldn't…(insert horrible feeling here)

And my favorite combo:

What's wrong with me? That other woman has perfect children, wears a size 2, has a fantastic marriage, a gorgeous home, and beautiful car. She goes on vacations, and has a great relationship with her mom and her husband. She has it all. Maybe if I try to do everything, I'll have it all too. Why can't I find the energy/motivation? I'm broken, something is wrong with me. This is all my fault.

These statements are the tools of the *Divide et Impera* message. They are part of keeping women divided against ourselves. This is not to say that the message of *Divide et Impera* is one that is consciously passed down through the generations. No, this is an unconscious process that almost every social system buys into. It has been with us from the beginning of Western Culture. You find the divided woman everywhere. She is Lilith and Eve in the Hebrew Bible. She is Demeter and Persephone in Greek mythology. She is Queen Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots in Britain. She is Queen Elizabeth II and Diana, Princess of Wales in modern history. What

these stories tell us is that there are two, and only two ways for women to be. You are either submissive or you are ostracized. This journey will take us down the winding staircase of the Divided Woman. As we take the deep dive, we will get more details about the path of the queen, the pitfalls, the places we trip, and the other characters along the way.

The World of Invisible Forces and Mystery

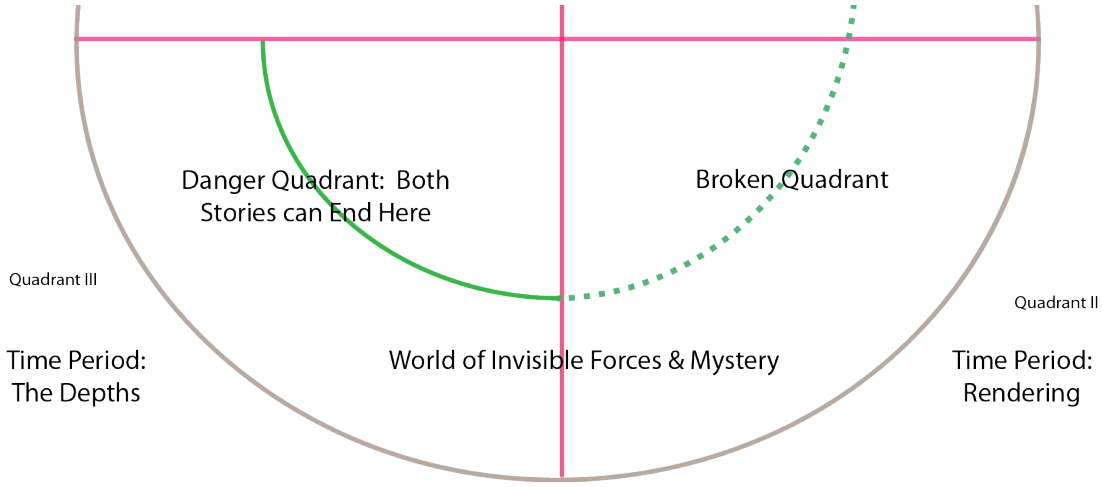
Looking at Figure 1, you will see the hemispheres of the worlds. Above the horizon, the world of Visible Power and Form keeps us in the realm of what is seen. In it are the conscious acts, and the beginnings of the changes women face as we move from innocent child to adolescent. Only once a woman has concluded her work beneath the horizon, in the World of Invisible Forces and Mystery, can the effects of her personal power emerge in the World of the Visible. Think of the horizontal line as a horizon. Above the horizon lies the ability to see clearly. Below the horizon, everything is jumbled and messy. Below the horizon is the power of transformation. No one can become a queen without slogging through mystery.

The lower quadrants II & III make up the world of Invisible forces and mystery. These are the worlds where it isn't clear what is happening from the outside, because the work is happening deep in the depths. All women experience these shifts, but most of us live unaware of their archetypal nature. These structures feel personal, and because they are personal, we feel as though we are responsible for some aspect of them.

What I have begun to understand through this work however, is that while the way is archetypal, women interact with the Queen's Path on a personal level. We did not create the markers, the divisions, the challenges, and the structures of the archetypal journey. We are traveling it, and it is working through us, because it is a universal story that all women

experience. Whether you are pursuing your own queen's path, or you are a writer, it is critical to know which parts of the journey are archetypal. For an individual the path doesn't *feel* archetypal, everything is personal.

Carl Jung said, "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate." When we are able to make the unconscious parts of the story conscious, we



free ourselves from the structural constraints that hold us captive. From the perspective of storytelling, the characters need to go through the trials along the path just as real women do. The moment they leave the world that makes sense in the first quadrant, they are in the period of their lives where they are confronted with mystery. No one can see these trials coming, even while you as an author, or as a master planner map them out. For real women, this period often feels like wandering in the darkness, not sure how to make sense of what is happening, and being frequently confronted with assertions that the divide is your fault.

The Underworld of Mystery, Power, & Transformation

The individual woman cannot traverse from quadrant one to quadrant four without going into the lower quadrants of Mystery and Invisible forces. It is in the lower half that she

encounters all of the unseen powers that will act on and through her in the journey towards sovereignty. The danger of the land below the horizon is that for thousands of years women have been kept there. We have been subject to men's journeys, and thus have occupied a kind of numinous space where we struggle to make sense of, and somehow also govern, the underworld. It is in the second quadrant that the final divide of the individual woman is complete, tearing her from her sister self, and turning those two halves against one another. This is called "the rendering" not in the sense of a created version of herself, but more in the slaughterhouse meaning of the word. She is ripped apart. As she traverses the second quadrant, she starts to get a sense that there is something external about the journey. There is a structure keeping her in a lane, in a persona, constraining and defining her as sure as the broken toes of bound feet, or the misshapen ribs of a lifetime in a corset.

As she leaves the second quadrant for the third, the woman "believes" that she is headed for salvation, when in truth she is about to face annihilation, death, or that particular ignobility of slavery, being erased. In the third quadrant death and rebirth chase her like a banshee. If the woman is lured into a "Happily Ever After" (HEA) then she metaphorically dies as an eternal girl. If she is shunned from her HEA then she can metaphorically die in isolation as a power-hungry witch. In neither case is she free, and in neither case is she happy and fulfilled. It is easy to see why women become associated with the Underworld here. If she never gets to leave it, it becomes a place she haunts.

The third quadrant is traditionally where women's stories go to die. A woman plans her whole life around the day she gets married, only to be subsumed by that role thereafter. A woman who doesn't marry, who lives out her career ambitions finds herself alone and longing,

sometimes bitter, wishing for the HEA. What each of these women need to complete their journey into the fourth quadrant is embodied transcendence. This can be seen in movies like *The Color Purple* where Celie finally gets to own her life, we see her *standing* on her own land, *embracing* her sister and her children, surrounded by her family of choice. Transcendence is symbolized by a physical change in stories like *Maleficent* when the title character regains the wings that were stolen from her. It is demonstrated in brilliant films and musicals like *Waitress*, where Jenna, the protagonist, realizes that she is powerful through the experience of labor and giving birth to her daughter, Lulu.

To return to the World of Visible Power and Form, she must take the Queen's Path and do the work of integration, which is the work of liberation. In the third quadrant (which is still in the quadrant of Invisible Forces and Mystery) the individual woman finds herself reflecting on her choices. If she doubles down on her role, whether it is as an eternal, ever-pure maiden, or as the power-hungry witch, she will be lost to herself and her true power forever. She can only return to the World of Visible Power and Form once she finds a way to integrate the Divided Woman. Once she does that work, transcendence leads her to her own personal sovereignty. Her own sovereignty and regency then will guide her in the world of power. She is no one’s property; her story belongs to her.

Returning to Face the Light

If she faces her sister self, and sacrifices the idea of achieving perfection on either track, she has a chance to reclaim her other side, and integrate both halves into a unified whole. When she does this, she has the power to ascend to a new role, one where she is untouchable by the divisive hands of the culture that separated her from her whole self. She is no longer interested in

the tracks and the lanes. She sees them for what they were, a set of cultural chains forged to disempower her. In the fourth quadrant, her true purpose unfolds, the sacred, embodied expression of her being. It is in this radical self-sovereignty that she finds her power, and in it we may call her a Queen, ascending to rule the domain of her true Self.

Once the woman goes through the necessary trials of redeeming and integrating her sister self she then is free to drop all the expectations of roles and focus on her own *Impera*. She is no longer divided, and no one can tell her what she should do, what her priorities are, or who she should give her words and work to. No, once she heals the divided woman, there are only a few steps left as she rises to claim her crown, and rule her own domain.

Entering the World of the Divided Woman and the Queen

Every woman in the world embarks on this journey whether we want to or not. For most of us, we never learn that there are steps beyond the "happily ever after" we were raised to expect. We compare ourselves to perfect versions of divided princesses, and terrible witches, without ever recognizing that there is so much more to the story.

Almost every woman I meet struggles with a form of perfectionism that a therapist would determine is pathological. I have treated many men, and few of them suffer in the same way that women do when it comes to this expectation of perfection. The problem is not that women are more perfectionistic than men, it is *the way* that we are perfectionists. No matter which lane we land in, we will always compare ourselves to a better, more idealized version of ourselves. No matter what we achieve in life, we will always look at other women as doing more, and doing it better. Regardless of whether or not we are killing ourselves at the gym, studying at night school, and struggling to not lose our cool with our children, we will feel guilty if this isn't *effortless*. We

will think something is wrong with us if we aren't effortlessly thin, beautiful, smart, or great parents. We never question that there is something wrong with us, of COURSE there's something wrong with us! We have failed in our pursuit of perfection. It never occurs to us that we have no models of *imperfection*. It never crosses our minds that the way we think about the expectations of effortlessness is actually a symptom of the very thing that is tearing us to pieces.

So for the next 250 pages or so we will take a slow walk down the Queen's Path. Along the path we will meet some familiar characters. The most important will be The Divided Woman. You will meet her next, and no doubt you will see yourself, the women in your life, or your characters more in one half than the other. You may also find that it isn't clear whether you should be in a single lane over another, and that is a good sign. As we go through each chapter I will introduce you to stories from: history, literature, sacred texts, novels, movies, and popular culture, that will demonstrate the qualities of the archetypal story I am endeavoring to explain. You will meet wicked witches, reluctant princesses, angry housewives, and bitter corporate executives. Throughout the journey they will all share the path. Each character is either in the throes of the divide, or is in the process of healing the broken pieces. There is no singular character who can emerge without first acknowledging the Path of the Queen. In the next chapter we are going to outline the divide so that as you encounter it throughout the book, it will be familiar. Let your hair down, kick off your glass slippers, and let's ease on down the Queen's Path.