

The Fire Years Manifesto

Read it the way it is meant to be read. Out loud, in company, one line per woman.

They called it the pause. Nobody asked us. So we take the pause out of menopause, and we light the rest of it on fire.

We were told it was just age. Just life. Just menopause. It was just unmeasured.

We do not accept The Shrug.

Normal is not the same as unmeasured. If it matters, we measure it. And we measure only what changes a decision. Feelings get dismissed. Numbers get treated. We arrive as charts now. Trending, dated, un-shruggable. And the chart is the bodyguard. Never the woman.

We were offered too little for so long that too little began to look like all there was. It isn't.

We do not eat less in order to be less. We cannot build armor out of restriction. Muscle is our currency. Strength is what nothing feels like.

We do not whisper about sleep, rage, fog, or desire. Wanting is health. The Shrug survives on silence, and we are done supplying it.

Grace is what they hand you when they have run out of treatment ideas. We declined.

We do not shrink to The Shrug. We ignite.

Thirty-five to eighty-five is fifty years. It is longer than everything before it. Kings get bunting for less.

We were always going to burn. A fever burns the house down. A bonfire is the thing people gather around. We are done being feverish.

We are not asking permission anymore. It is much less impressive than it looks, and it is available to everybody.

We are done being just anything. Just age. Just life. Just menopause. Just normal.

We flip the pillow, and we flip it again, and we show our daughters where the cool side is.

And we do not burn alone. Sisterhood is handing each other the match.

We are not asking for too much. We were never asking for too much.

There is no application. There are no dues. We did not invent this club.

We took it back.

Welcome to your Fire Years. Light it properly, and take your sisters with you.

We are un-effing-paused.