

Mother Blood Article

Writer/ Interviewer Ayse Gursoz

Co-writer/ Interviewee Laurel Kitten

“The spirit of the Golden Eagle” came to her after 4 days of ceremonies and 3 days of meetings between four different indigenous traditions of North and South America. The spirit of the eagle told her that it was “bringing her something that she did not already know and that if she did not humble herself and listen carefully, she would miss what was coming.” She is Laurel Kitten, a doula (labor/birth support) and Ceremonialist lightworking towards the **resacralization** of birth culture from its current state, wherein natural laws are bypassed and procedures are spurred primarily by business interest.

Red Lightning Camp, which made its Playa debut at Burning man this year and the “Mother Blood Moon Mysteries” are the current manifestations of her efforts toward igniting a movement across the land, of “women reclaiming their blood and the five gateway passages of birth, first menstruation, childbirth, menopause and death.” This movement is about creating a “Beauty Bridge into the new world of the Golden Age. This new world is one of sustainability and a respectful relationship with all life.”

The presence of this camp couldn't have come at a better time. The energy I felt from past Burns I've attended had a subtle but evident patriarchal edge to them. This year however while prancing through the Playa, I could not help but notice the careful and conscious construction of what I learned to be Red Lightning Camp. There is a prophecy behind this camp: “When the women return their blood to the Earth, the men will no longer shed their blood in war.”

The prophecy was given one week after the spirit eagle came as Laurel was taking a hike in Northern CA. She stopped on the trail and asked the earth directly what her next steps were to be. As she sat on the trail to tune in further, a rattlesnake came onto the path about four feet away and remained there until the transmission was over. Snakes are connected to the Goddess for they shed their skin every month, as women shed their blood. The earth spoke to her and told her to cancel the next three days of activities, during her next three menstrual cycles, to reconnect her womb consciousness to nature. Spirit told her “there is a deep loneliness in the people because the women have disconnected their womb awareness from nature. Once the women reconnect their wombs to nature, the loneliness will leave the people and become a distant memory.” She was also to leave her blood that was given freely each month as an offering to nature and in time, as the women returned to these practices, they would relieve their men from the need to shed their blood in war.

Laurel followed her instructions and was so moved by her experiences that she has continued these practices from that time on. Out of her “Moon Lodges”, another name for her menstruation time, she reclaimed the old teachings that inspired the heart/womb of Red Lightening and a growing movement, of the value and use of our “mother blood wisdom in our daily lives.”

I had heard before of using menstrual blood as a potent fertilizer for plants. Results have always been characterized with words and phrases to the tune of “astronomical” and “crazy-fast” growth. I didn’t really delve into the depths of what it meant to connect the moon cycle to further other life cycles until I took a Permaculture Design Certification course in South Dakota this year. In Permaculture, the concept of waste is removed completely, and everything is looked at in terms of nutrients, which made me think, “well, why don’t we use our blood as nutrients?” Maybe there is really something to this prophecy. What would the world be like if all women did use their blood as nutrients? For one thing, it would mean that we would not be at odds with our menstrual cycles, cursing them for interfering with our daily lives. We would not be ashamed of them. We would be honoring ourselves and honoring the earth by connecting ourselves to nature in one seamless cycle.

Laurel explains that women are the ecosystems of humanity. She says “When the women are in alignment with their natural rhythms and cycles, they will imprint the life that grows within them with the optimal pattern for development and beauty. The health of the maternal matrix is the foundation for the health of a society. Healthy babies who are brought up and nurtured, at each major developmental transition in a human life, grow into a society that cares deeply for its relationships with all of life. When nature on the inside is cared for, nature on outside will be cared for.”

So what does it look like when we are not connected to nature? Well, for one thing, it’s estimated that a woman who commits to using tampons will use over 12,000 and each of them will end up at landfills. 11.3 billion sanitary pads are land-filled or incinerated in the U.S. alone each year. In addition to the environmental destruction from the initial chemical processing of rayon for tampons and pads, plastic tampon applicators are also proving to be extremely invasive and devastating to the wildlife and environment. These applicators are finding their way into ocean currents via overloaded, outdated sewage systems. They do not break down, and are washing up on shores around the world years after they enter the oceans.

The good news is we can avoid all of these poisoning pathways by using ‘the Keeper’ or a ‘Diva Cup’. It’s a reusable squishy implement that fits inside the vagina and can hold up to 1 ounce of fluid. It also can be worn for up to ten hours without being changed, and can last up to ten years before it needs to be

replaced. The nitrogen-rich fluid can then be harvested from 'the keeper' to feed plants. It's interesting. I'll mention this to women and men alike, and the popular responses tend to be two words: "That's gross" or "That's disgusting". Well, I think that this solution is not what's disgusting. What is disgusting is the environmental devastation.

Remember: "When nature on inside is cared for, nature on outside will be cared for"? Studies show that dioxins, a by-product of the chlorine bleaching process of pads and tampons are not only carcinogenic, but also toxic to the immune system and can cause birth defects (Houppert, 1999). We live in a culture that's ok with poisoning women. I think that that is what is disgusting. We need to shift our perspective and acknowledge and internalize that the natural is not disgusting. No, it is real, it is sacred, and it is alive.

Laurel has been taking 3 days off at the beginning of her cycle each month, to listen to nature and the wisdom of her Ancestors during this window of opportunity, when she says we are in the place of the north of our monthly cycle. She says, "we women are the keepers of the earth lodge and that life cycles in circles. There are cycles within cycles. North on the wheel of life is the place of the Ancestors, winter, midnight, the place where our body is when we are bleeding or pregnant. This is when women's spiritual doorways are most open, when they are connected to the universe, and when they are right-brain dominant. This is the time to move inward and to receive vision for ourselves and for our communities. This is the time we seed the new cycle, which is ingrained in the pattern of each day, month, year, and human life depending on what circle is in focus." Women nowadays generally curse their periods for getting in the way of "business as usual". She says women are forcing themselves to act as if they are in the south (summer/energy moving outward/left brain dominant), instead of respecting the time of the month when the blood flow comes as the time for drawing inward and right brain dreaming, which is the north part of the cycle. We are wasting our sacred visionary time in order to fit in with a culture of work, work, work. The consciousness we hold during our bleeding time becomes the prayer that we play out for the next cycle. This is either a prayer of wakefulness and beauty or one of unconsciousness and imbalance.

Laurel feels that the high level of fear that many Western women face around the birthing of their own babies is not only due to generations of birth trauma produced by a system that looks at birth through a filter of what can go wrong, but also because "we are bypassing and over riding our innate woman wisdom, by not making time to enter into dream/vision time during our bleeding." She says, babies come into the world right-brain dominant, and if a new mommy has spent a life not valuing the very essence of woman right-brain consciousness (moon lodge time), which is what is needed to align herself with her baby and is the place she rests in herself in her menopausal years, no wonder there is so much fear. "Our understanding of our natural hormonal system, our blood and

what promotes health and what promotes disconnect within the human family, needs to be re-examined.” We need to rethink how we may best care for women's natural health mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Women imprint within our babies the hard wiring that will determine how they grow to be men and women who care for this natural world that we live in. Most of we women curse our wombs and work against them. We have birth control pills, c-sections, and hormones. All of the dominant elements in our culture today are causing us to bypass nature. She says that “we women have much to recover within ourselves and in our doing so, we will bring a great beauty back to this world. Humanity needs to re-evolve into a place where women are at the center and men are at the outside as protectors. This is not only gender specific in the world, but also within our own inner landscape.”

Women, I ask us to not curse our wombs, but instead to honor them. Let us be drawn inward when we are in the north direction of our cycle. Let us take the time to sit with nature. We may have to make initial sacrifices in order allow ourselves this time to draw inward, but it will be a great step in the expansion and evolution of collective consciousness. Vision is waiting at the door, and the doors are open during that time for us to access our true path, and bring our hearts, minds, and wombs into harmonic resonance, thereby activating Laurel's Holy Trinity within our own lives. So I say, let us return our blood to the earth. Perhaps then, the men will no longer shed theirs.