

# Beginning After The End – Fire Medicine Of The Snake Woman

*BY SARAH L. HARVEY*

She is the midwife of change. We call her into our lives when we are desperate – ready for the suffocating structures of the painful past to burn down, and for the future to blaze ahead in determined, lustrous glory.

We could call her Kali. The Holy Bitch. The Snake Woman. Lilith. She who is fire. She who lets us get away with nothing that hurts us. We could call her our enemy, our gut-wrenching, sinking fear of change. But, she is our friend; our deepest ally. She is the belief, the hot-blooded resilience that can get us through anything.

Her dance is not subtle. It stings. It has fangs. It writhes.

It's dark. A pitch black night with no stars.

It's rage and shame and the jolted shock of trauma. It's all the shit we always tried so hard not to face. It's the words that lay heavy upon us like swords, the fragmented chapters we don't want to talk about, the muddied things that haunt us before we go to sleep at night.

Her dance is the dance of death, which really, is a new breath sucked in through dry, eager lips.

Her dance is the slaying of the-no-longer useful, which really, is the spirited, moistening dance of life.

She is the womb. Dark and damp and mysterious.

Her fiery, feminine fingers hold the jeweled, embryonic hope

of everything that is chaotic, bloody, messy, vulnerable, brave, and just plain real.

She holds the crackling flames of change in her palms gently, with the dedicated look of a warriorress etched in her intently focused eyes.

She takes no bullshit. Bullshit is the thing she destroys. Because she loves us that much.

And she'll find us, exactly when we need her.

She speaks loudly, in the moments when our knees buckle and we hit the floor—

Unable to keep it together anymore.

Unable to lie to ourselves anymore.

Unable to coat it all with a pretty, polished smile anymore.

Unable to hate ourselves so thoroughly and hide from the lightning of our power anymore.

She undresses us, layer after layer, taking off every scrap of falsity, of people-pleasing, of not-truth, of powerlessness, of victimhood, and she peels it all away like an old bandage, until we are left raw.

Utterly raw.

Dripping from the depth of our smoldering core.

Yet, we glisten more than ever in this rawness. We burn.

It is exquisite.

And she holds us here.

***She, for it is she who dives deep, she who transforms the impossible, she who is Pluto, she who goes where others are scared to go – she roars to life in those moments when only truth remains.***

She is what sparks to life, when everything else dies.

When life is collapsing around us, when it all seems to be shattering before our eyes – she comes slinking in like the thick velvet of midnight, and whispers to us...

*“This is alchemy, my dear. I know it doesn’t look like it, but this is everything coming together.”*

And still, our stubborn minds refuse to understand.

“Sit,” she commands.

So we do.

And we watch her. And she shows us exactly how to do it–

She shows us how to take off the chains, and set ourselves free.

Because –

Freedom comes in gusts when she lets her Self feel it all–

She sweeps the floor with her long, messy hair and howls because it hurts so much.

Tears pulsate, sobs emanate.

And she has died, like this, a thousand times.

The constant, flicking motion of shedding her skin, because this is what she has to do.

Frenetic, frantic, desperate, soft, slow, and gradual, sometimes.

A phoenix, a dragon, the fire in her belly will always be stoked to life somehow.

For it's not really that she breathes fire.

It's that she *is* fire.

She is the alchemical song of the broken-hearted. She is the almost-giving up of the despairing. She is the fragrant snow of everything we think we're supposed to be ashamed of; all that we have learned to fear.

She dances death, she dances pain, she dances slow, beautiful, passionate sex. She dances trauma. She dances terror. She dances brokenness and guilt.

She dances all the places inside us we think are fucked up beyond repair.

She dives deeper, plunging past the placid surface, and goes where few dare to go.

She weeps into the river basins of all that is lost, and sweeps her long, delicate fingers against all that is angry, all that is outraged, oppressed, abused, and not at all okay. She screams and sobs until an ocean floods at her feet, salty tears, and bright orange coral reefs. Turquoise waves lap eloquently at her ankles.

And then she smiles gently, a twinkle of starlight sewn into her eyes.

And in her palms, she holds liquid gold that illuminates everything within a thousand-mile radius.

***Because holy shit, sometimes, transformation looks like straight-up madness. It looks like a visit to hell. It feels like it, too. But she tells us to trust it anyway. Because all this chaos is the blossoming.***

It's rageful and holy. It is simply the shell of falsity that is cracking away – the fragments returning home. Wholeness is inevitable now. Beauty whispers so palpably.

"Breaking was simply but the beginning of your journey," she whispers softly in our ears when we're so close to giving up.

"Breaking is beauty," she says.

"Breaking is perfect.

Breaking is inevitable.

From ruin, we will rise again."

This is her song. She will sing it to us a thousand times in the toughest moments.

And still, she terrifies the shit out of us. She's so intense. So piercing. We look at her and a shudder rips through us like pure electricity.

Because she is poison, too. She courses with a strong venom that pulses into your central nervous system in twenty seconds flat, and rips apart all the ways you lie, all the ways you hide from power, from your truth, from your Self.

She's that potent, see.

But she only poisons the parts of us that are already dying, that are already dead.

She only ever strengthens who we really are.

She loves us so thoroughly that she sucks her fangs into all that we need to let go of, all that we fear to let go of, and she wraps her warm body around it all in a final embrace as we say a resistant goodbye.

She rips it away.

Shock throbs through us.

But in what we think are holes and rips and tatters – freedom gushes in.

Love pitter patters.

Beauty gathers.

Sweetness collects, like dew.

And all that toxic sh\*t – she slides it down her body – it's food, purified into fresh, everlasting light.

She eats our pain and composts it into new life.

That's how much she loves us.

***Because she knows that brilliance is born in the shadows. It is born in the grotesque and impossible and wretched. Because darkness is not badness. It is not base or wrong.***

There is no ruin.

There is only the everlasting promise of rising. Of becoming. Of being. Of unfolding. Of valiant growth.

There is only ever the beginning after the ending.

And all this fire, all the death, all the hard-to-swallow-truth, and blunt slaps to be awake – it's not just to make us suffer endlessly. Not at all.

All the mud on our knees, the rage, the hurt, the abuse, the disappointment, the betrayal, the twisted bones of aching shock we have faced–

It leads us directly to the door of the thing we have always wanted more than anything–

A life lived with integrity.

A life soaked with sweetness and joy.

A life stoked with courage and strength.

A life that resembles who we really are.

A life where we honor ourselves, daily.

A life where we are free, dripped in the ink of our truth, planted with firm roots on our soul's path.

And the transformation will continue, it always will. She is never really done with us. Change is a forever thing. Always spiraling and going deeper, always expanding, contracting, burning, and dancing with us somehow. The perfume of her presence is always near, see.

And as we shake and moan and rise from the shadows to kiss the breaking of daylight, we are utterly transformed. Every cell. Every pore. Down to the gown, we are newborn, soaked in fresh vulnerability. Although it might feel unbearably raw, like we have no skin, it's not a burden, but a treasure.

A shining medallion of our bravery–

Our tender hearts.

And all will embrace and braid together, inside our muscles and tendons and DNA – and outside, in the cauldron of our lives, too.

And we will feel different. Lighter. But more solid, too.

And she will drape a fat, yellow snake around our shoulders.

And she will say, she will mutter, she will howl, hands pressed to our chest,

“Thank you.”

And we will look at her, with tears shining in our eyes.

And say,

“Thank you.”

Because there is nothing we can't return to the earth. There is absolutely nothing we can't transform. Because darkness is not to fear.

In darkness, we learn that we can glisten.

That we are the glistening.

We are the tiny sharded sunlight of God.

Because she shows us the most important thing we can ever learn – how to rise from the bottom; that the bottom is not the end.

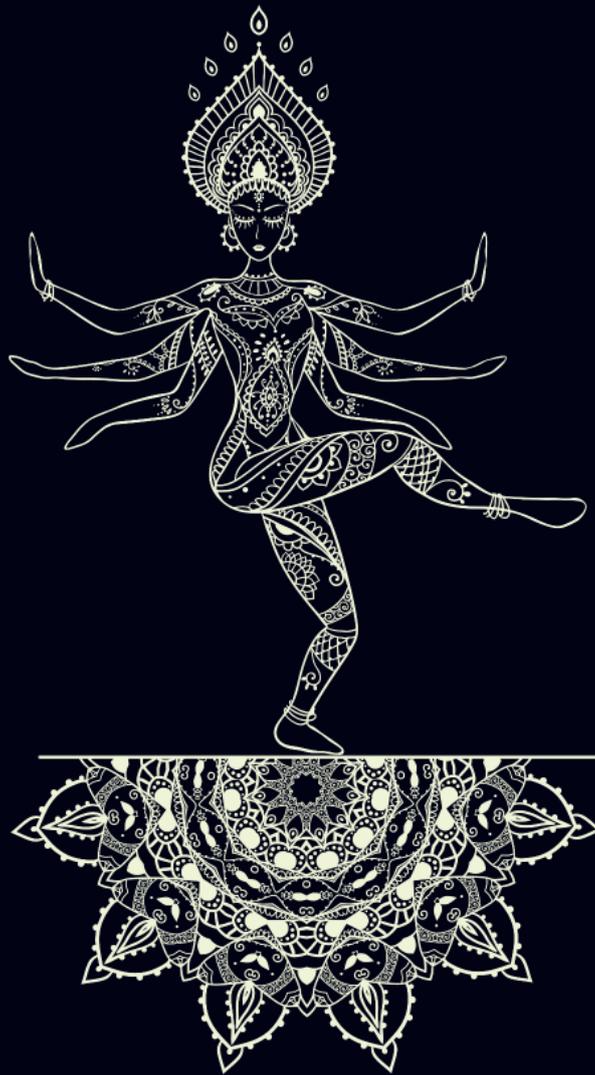
That we can die, then become more alive than ever.

For there is always the beginning after the ending.

***For more self-study, [The Urban Howl](#) recommends [Awakening Shakti: The Transformative Power of the Goddesses of Yoga](#) .***

*Sip a little more:*

*Love Is The First Medicine, He Told Me  
You're Not Just A Mess Or Just A Woman –  
You're A Force Of Nature*



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