

THE MAGIC AT ORENAS CASTLE

DECEMBER 21, 2010

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It is December. We sit peacefully gazing into the deep quiet that has arrived with a winter snow in Ashland. Solstice approaches, the darkest night of the year. It has been six weeks since we returned from Sweden where we participated in taking responsibility for thoughts and actions that have caused suffering and separation between men and women for thousands of years. At the beginning of the gathering we were asked, "What is the purpose of your participation in this gathering?" Cullen answered for many of us, "I am here with one purpose: to end the patriarchy and to help bring back the Divine Feminine." And with that, we began our journey through a week-end of taking responsibility, seeking healing, and celebrating unity with all the others who had arrived to do the same thing.

According to the Mayan Calendar, November 3rd ushered in the energy of a new Day (360 days on our Gregorian calendar), bringing humanity unprecedented opportunities for a clearer vision of who we are and what we create. We chose to gather in Sweden on the week-end following this auspicious date, joining Mayan Calendar scholar Carl Calleman, Petter and Julie Barve, Pernilla Romare, Diana Johansson, Martin Andersson and Anira Moller, Marcus Engblad, Rebecka Hagerforsse, Erika Mikaelsson, and many others who became dear friends in a few short days of work to end patriarchy and lovingly invite the return of the Divine Feminine.

Sweden lies on an energetic line that runs from a central point in Africa (home of the Bush people) to Trondheim, Norway. The energy of this ley line supports change, movement, magic, insight, and understanding. Because of the energetic makeup of this particular place on Earth, it was perfect for

welcoming the new energy. The light would travel from this place around the world. It was the perfect place to commit to a week-end of work to make lasting changes in human behavior and set into motion better connection and communication, as we move away from the dualistic separation humanity has experienced for thousands of years towards the New Reality of Unity Consciousness.

Women and men separated into segregated groups to do the work. The men didn't want to talk. They were reluctant to share their views about what it would take to first acknowledge and then apologize for inappropriate masculine behavior towards women. For a long time, nobody talked. When they did, some of the men were adamant that they did not have anything to apologize for. So accustomed to habitual male roles were the men, that it was challenging for some of them to even recognize that something was wrong with the current system. Others were keenly aware that something was awry in the masculine interaction with women. It was evident in the men's gathering that the masculine preoccupation with failure to admit any wrong-doing (the need to be right) and the refusal to step down from the male hierarchal place in society, were still prevalent. The men's group fought hard to reach a place of understanding that there was, indeed, something to admit and apologize for in men's historical and current treatment of women under the patriarchy. However, after a long struggle, the men did finally come to a consensus over the issue of whether or not to honor women, their wisdom, and their place in society. An apology was formed and a honoring ceremony for the women was created, which later occurred.

The women's group had their own issues to work through. The women wanted *only* to talk, and the talk centered around how each woman felt. It is a pattern that is familiar to women: women often take the role of communicating

while men often take the role of action. Most in the women's group focused on expressing their hurt and victimhood at first, rather than accepting responsibility for their part in the issues at hand. But our promise to take responsibility called for us to break that pattern. The men *needed* to talk about what they felt, about their pain, about how they feel separated in order to understand the masculine role of controlling in order to feel safe. The women *needed* to stop talking and take action in order to understand the feminine role of quietly manipulating to get what they want or to stay safe, if not merely survive, within the patriarchal structured society. After many false starts, the first woman stood up and declared that she took responsibility for not appreciating men. The next woman followed, admitting and taking responsibility for manipulating men through her sexuality. The flow began, each woman contributing her part in taking responsibility to break old patterns of gender-based duality. After each woman had expressed herself, the women also formed an apology and created a toning ceremony for the men, to welcome them back into harmony, acceptance, and love.

Divided into two gender based groups on the first day, we had slowly begun the work to change those patterns of thinking and behaving, first by acknowledging and taking responsibility for how we have interacted, and then by offering to do things differently: think new and more harmonious thoughts about each other (thoughts without blame and judgment), speak with kindness and respect to each other, and rather than acting as competitive adversaries who come together only for mutual needs, to come together as cooperative partners offering unconditional love. It was painful to admit who and how we had been in relationship with each other; and it was potent to promise to do it differently now. Yet we emerged from positions of blame and justification for all our past actions, separately and together taking responsibility to change how

we interact, and in that decision, we began to love each other more unconditionally and to be more aware of how we can treat one another with kindness and respect.

Ceremonies followed the work; there were so many ceremonies that they almost flowed into one continual ceremonial event. Because ceremonies must be experienced rather than described, we will only allude to the basics of the magic that unfolded. A couple wished to be married, joining their separate paths into a unified life. As we are ordained ministers, we married them in the circle of loving witnesses. We planted a tree with heart shaped cherry fruit, representing the ideas we were planting within our own hearts. We watered it with water we had communally blessed and the shared water of our own intentions, reserving some of the blessed water to carry back to the sea. With reverence for the water, we walked the hundreds of steps together to return our collective blessed water to its source. As we poured our water into the sea, we toned to the sky, to the ocean, and to each other. And when the songs of our hearts had been presented to the universe, we began to flow outwards, away from the deeply connected family we had created, towards the larger family of the world, taking our promises for the New Reality of Unity Consciousness with us.

It will be an interesting transition. Once you know something, you can never unknow it. Now that we have seen how we have been, we can never go back to living individually without awareness of the needs of all others (the greatest good for all.) Selfish behavior cannot co-exist with heart-felt awareness of the connection to all. To give up control, we must be aware of our desire to "take charge." The masculine impulse, which exists within both men and women in the patriarchy (although throughout history men have been greater controllers), wants to direct, to correct, to contain, and to take control. Within

such an atmosphere, many (particularly women) have responded through manipulation, believing that manipulating others was the only way to have needs met or to remain safe. The clearest example of this can be seen in how we have tried and continue to try to control and manipulate Nature.

The transition requires women to stop trying to be like men, and to reclaim their own strengths as women. It requires women to learn to be strong and express themselves through the power of love rather than using the patriarchal version of power through control. Women must have the courage to speak the truth and stop quietly manipulating behind the scenes, as women have for centuries. The transition requires that men reclaim their intuition and their creative abilities. Men must learn to be better listeners and to value ideas that are strange to their accustomed logic; they must learn to accept guidance from women and follow their hearts rather than their minds and beliefs; they must restrain their need for control, and especially change the way they approach others with assertion that they are always "right."

Patriarchal ideas have ruled humankind for thousands of years, dominating and creating competition and fear. The feminine impulse has shriveled in such an environment, and it is time for the Divine Feminine to return, to lead us towards an environment of cooperation and love that is opposite from the model of competition and linear progress that have dominated our societies in the form of patriarchy. The feminine impulse, which also exists in both women and men, impels us to co-create, to have trust and a grateful heart, to see the beauty of the world and each other, and to love unconditionally. With respect and unconditional acceptance of each other, we can co-create a better world. Thus, we will be moving in flow with the universe, which is calling us towards unity.

We were a seed group in Sweden, taking responsibility for the world and vowing to change everything that competes, controls, and causes harm. But we created a heart-felt potency for positive change within us, and we have taken our pledge to make a difference back to our respective homes. We hope to return to partake in the fruit of the cherry tree, joining our new Swedish family in commemorating the fruitfulness of the tree we planted together and what it represents. Until then, we will keep in our hearts and minds our promise to change. Like the drops of water that we humans are, we must keep our own water pure through our thoughts and new intentions, as we flow towards the greater universal sea of unity and love.

With love and light,

Rebecca and Cullen