



# PLUM DREAMS DIARY



ON MOTHERS, MEN,  
MODERN MEDICINE, AND THE DIVINE

JOYCE LYNN

PLUM  
DREAMS  
DIARY

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MODERN MEDICINE, AND THE DIVINE

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*To the Guide of Dreams*  
*with immense gratitude*

*Dreams are the*  
*language of the soul,*  
*the voice of the Divine*

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE:

*PLUM DREAMS DIARY* records my personal journey. The thoughts and ideas gleaned from dreams are offered as my experience rather than as advice of any kind. These dream accounts are not intended to portray any actual occurrence, establishment, or person living or deceased.

## PROLOGUE

Dreams bequeath sacred gifts. With wit and wisdom, these nocturnal visitors offer direction and guidance for our well-being.

I know this now, but for years I was a left-brained journalist, depending on rote and reason to navigate the world. An ambitious East Coast reporter, I covered politics in the nation's capital.

Although outwardly successful, I struggled with a phalanx of debilitating problems: writer's block, an acrimonious relationship with my mother, chronic health difficulties, failed romances, confused religious beliefs. And, this is only a partial list.

To overcome these impediments, I tried therapy, personal growth seminars, medical fixes, overeating — with mixed success.

In 1981, I moved to San Francisco, to the West Coast. Soon, a non-rational occurrence intruded. I remembered my first dream ever. It held contours of a crucial scene for the screenplay I was writing.

The dreams shared in *PLUM DREAMS DIARY* appeared on my night-time screen. Every morning, I recorded the scenes in a journal, playing with the symbols, images, and word puns. In this way, I taught myself to understand the dreams; in this way, the dreams taught me to integrate their lessons into my life.

We need more than intelligence and logical thinking to secure a meaningful life. Ancients and their spiritual traditions honored dreams as harbingers of healing the body and heart and of guiding a people. They revered the dream as sage wisdom.

Nightly encounters convinced me dreams are the language of the soul, the voice of the Divine.

Dreams continue to speak to me. I trust these messengers, calling upon their acumen.

During the potential health crisis retold in this book, the doctor said, probably to assuage my fears, “Well, for a writer these are important experiences.” His comment made a dramatic impression.

The pioneering dreams in this book form a telling collection of choice dreams with the power to transform women’s lives. This second edition reorders the remembrances into explorations of our true self, mothers, men, modern medicine, and the nature of the Divine.

As I update this Prologue, the guiding, prophetic, curative capacities of dreams are apparent. For compelling reasons, probe the dreams and contemplate their lessons for your life. For commanding insights, perceive the wealth your dreams hold.

We all carry the scars of growing up, disappointments in work and love, and fears about our health. We all want

to find happiness and lead a meaningful life. May these pages inspire you to listen to dreams, imperative guideposts punctuating the way.

Joyce Lynn  
Mill Valley, California, 2012

## TRUE SELF

---

Grant, O Eternal God, that we may lie down in peace,  
and raise us up, O Sovereign, to life renewed. Spread over  
us the shelter of Your peace; guide us with Your good  
counsel; and for Your name's sake, be our Help.

— *Gates of Prayer:*  
*The New Union Prayerbook*

So great a power is there of the soul upon the body that  
which ever way the soul imagines and dreams that it  
goes, doth it lead the body

— Agrippa,  
16th century theologian and physician

## FIVE WOMEN PAINTING

*A black and white etching of five women entwined  
in work and play appears.*

The women pulsate with life.  
In placid stillness,  
moving effortlessly  
combing hair  
serenading  
drawing  
writing  
reading

Whispering/singing/whistling.

Sunbursts, bold stripes, wavy lines  
unfold horizontally.  
Daisies mark the scene.

The women, different nationalities,  
yet interrelated,  
interconnected.

The women powerful simply because  
they do not seek power.

They seek to empower themselves.  
They seek to empower each other.

## RESCUE

*People gather. An ambulance and police surround a tree at Dominican College. I stand beside a bicycle. Marriage prospects assemble here, too.*

The dream solves the plight of the plot of the screenplay. Instead of struggling over every word, I compose with ease.

At the altar, the heroine announces she is disavowing her marriage.

### JENNIFER

Since I was a  
teenager, I've dreamt  
every man I've dated  
would save me from  
singlehood, or I've done  
it all myself.

I've pushed and pulled  
men to love me — or  
pretended it was no big deal.

Now, I'm giving up my search  
for a rescuer and my fierce  
struggle for independence.

Instead, the promise I'm  
making today: I'm going  
to find strength — real  
strength — in myself.

The dream redirects the play — and its creator. Rather than manipulate external elements, like Jennifer, the writer contemplates turning inward to find the ineffable.

## DROWNING

*Flooding — the deluge of conformity — swirls outside an apartment building where people live apart.*

*A neighbor, the fearless expression of individuality, suggests a young woman, struggling to shatter the traditional female mold, take off her high heels.*

Should she remove her shoes?

Wearing them, she stands tall, above the water. The young woman smiles and disappears.

*Outside, a swirling torrent fills the back parking lot.*

Leaving through the front door, I can walk to the car and avoid drowning.

## IF THE SHOE FITS

*A big stone mansion dominates the landscape at Yosemite National Park. Here, I wait for a high school friend.*

*Where is she?*

*Soon, she appears, prim and proper, wearing a tidy black dress and patented-leather heels, hair impeccably coiffed.*

*I hand her a pair of shoes from Chandler's or Baker's, the budget stores for confirmation, prom, and party pumps.*

Lovely gowns, far more sophisticated than teenage yearnings, eclipsed the shoes: the strapless dress with wedding cake tiers, a midnight blue crinoline skirt embossed with violet lilies.

*My cohort discards the shoes. "This is the second time a friend has returned my gift," I complain.*

For years, attention fixed on the chintzy shoes diminished the alluring dresses. For decades, a down-at-the-heels image dominated retrospection.

The flourishing friend radiates only the best. Poised and assured, she picks me up.

.....

*Mr. Right-of-the-Moment appears and apologizes for acting like a slob. "You have another chance," I grant. He wears elf shoes.*

## PUBLISH OR PERISH

Thinking — rather than picturing — what the screenplay co-writer once advised:

*"Go through your resistance to success or go write commercials in Slippery Rock."*

I repeat the axiom to another writer.

## FEAR

*Fear of failure.*

*Fear of failing.*

Only those words.

## STARFISH

*Pictures of camp friends appear.*

*A sun state beauty, curvy with flaming red locks;  
another, lanky with mousy blonde hair.*

*Fast forward to the tall, athletic camper in her  
thirties, wearing a color-coordinated suit, looking chic  
and professional.*

*Then, back at camp, bunk mates have packed their  
duffels. Did they find anything under their baggage?*

*The girls say fish — starfish.*

As the camp director nurtured the talents and  
abilities society and family squelch, under guidance of  
the Divine, we can banish the insecurities accumulated  
since childhood.

Then, we find our true Self.

---

*Later, grown up, the lanky camper holds a  
triangular piece of chocolate.*

MOTHERS

## GRANDMOTHER'S CHAIR

*Mother dallies with my sisters. Now, it's too late.  
Wellesley has accepted others. There is no place for me.*

*My sister stands before our grandmother's chair,  
Rococo upholstered in silk brocade.*

*Aloud, I worry, "Someone could steal the chair."  
Mother denies its worth; I insist on the significance.  
A miniature china chair, adorned with her  
grandmother's sepia picture, graces an antique curio.*

What wild women! My mother, a take-no-prisoners tennis player; my grandmother, a pioneer in a long skirt on clay courts; my great grandmother, a foreign correspondent for *The New York Times*.

The tableau evokes Judy Chicago's Dinner Party, an artistic ode to women of legendary accomplishment.

The heroines speak. Instead of acquiescing to a culture devaluing women, find value in yourself.

My grandmother's chair, covered in yellow, the color of joy.

Joy, the root of Joyce, re-covers a sense of dignity. Mother finally appreciates grandmother's chair.

## FROM STICKER LADY

*The founder of a popular toy company sits on the floor of her Victorian house. She copied a rival report.*

*A document prints before her paper.*

*Then, the toy maker and a woman with short-cropped hair celebrate the Sabbath together, eating pea soup.*

*How can they break bread after the businesswoman stole her plan?*

*The toy maker's account prints again.*

*Stickers, like lemons on the slot machines at Tahoe casinos, fill the document.*

My report will not be child-like, infantile, but mature, for adults.

Petitioning a declaration we create a new relationship, I write Mother.

I want to feel authentic, not like a lemon, not like a slot machine, not labeled.

## TO SLICKER WOMAN

*Dressing for the rain, I don overalls like Sissy Spacek wore in The River.*

The slicker protects from the flood of ugly words threatening to inundate mother and daughter.

*I stuff the watch she gave me, her high school graduation present from my grandfather, inside my blouse to keep it dry, to protect my mother's gift.*

She bequeathed life, she bestowed time.

*Putting the watch next to my heart, I go outside.*

## NEARLY NEW

*In the garage of my childhood home, clothes — donations to the thrift store Mother managed as her philanthropic contribution — fill three shopping carts.*

She dispensed discarded items:  
a white tennis skirt,  
London Fog raincoat,  
and sweater adorned with snowflakes.

Second-hand clothes,  
second-hand rose.

.....  
*Across the street, through a window,  
a neighbor is typing, living in the present.*

## DRIVEN

*Driving toward a dead-end street, Mother must turn right or left. She wants to turn left, so she moves into the arrow-marked lane.*

*Thinking she can turn with the traffic, she slides into the less crowded lane. But when she arrives at the end of the street, she can only turn right, taking us the wrong way.*

*Traveling at night to arrive at our destination, we follow a treacherous route through Sausalito — arriving at the Golden Gate Bridge. Mother could turn around and proceed to her destination, but she refuses.*

*Terror strikes the passengers. We wonder: Will we survive? One rider warns, “Going this way we have to cross the Cliffs of Dover.”*

The Cliffs, chalk white shores where embattled armies once clashed.

*Finally, we arrive.*

Like my mother, I am driving in the wrong direction.

A medical crisis — abnormal cells — forces confrontation with dominant patterns and fears and with the recognition a deep grasp of life is missing.

MEN



## GOOD-BYE, DOLLY

*The office mail clerk pushes a dolly cart outside  
City Hall.*

I can return the cart before camping with the  
socially-conscious writer I have in mind for Mr. Right.

I can replace the cart used to deliver the mail;  
I can scuttle the doll-like behavior engaged to  
deliver the male.

*The Golden Gate bus stop in front of the restaurant  
Squids appears.*

Squids, inky black sea creatures, armed with  
eight tentacles.

Eight, the number of death

and

regeneration.

## PUSH-UPS

*I am doing push-ups on a horizontal bar.*

The message: Instead of pushing and pulling men,  
instead of coercing others, develop strength in your self.

.....

*I am somewhere with a dog, and the animal  
grows smaller.*

## PARTY'S OVER

*In a motel room, Mr. Right-of-the-Moment stands by  
the window.*

*The Venetian blinds are drawn. I expect a celebration  
with champagne.*

*Instead, Styrofoam packing beads litter the floor.*

## SUPER MEN

*The word processing supervisor approaches.  
Like Superman, he wears a purple T-shirt.  
He shifts into my father, who twists into  
Mr. Right-of-the-Moment.*

Word processing, turning words into story,  
is my department.  
So is spinning ordinary men into super men,  
allowing their words, sharp as arrows, to pierce the soul.

---

*The overseer wears a purple T-shirt.  
Purple, the color of transformation.*

## DAY DREAMS

*Wearing yellow-tinted sunglasses, seeing rainbows, I  
look out the window.  
Mr. Right's daughter imitates, doing what I am doing.  
Suddenly, she warns, "Step out of the street, so you're  
not blindsided."*

## THIS IS IT

*The receptionist warns,  
“You may not like it, but this is it.”  
She jumps up and down, pointing.  
Mr. Right agrees, gesturing affirmatively.*

I am not it.  
Only the moment matters.

## CARING & WISE

*A man stands next to Karen Wise.*

Does he accompany her because she is caring and  
wise — what men want, what we all want?

## UNION SQUARE

*The door from the parking garage to the Union Square hotel is locked.*

*A co-worker furnishes the key: a book about appreciating life titled Living, Loving and Learning.*

*The book opens the door.*

*As I descend on the escalator, a colleague and his girl friend, dressed in evening clothes, ride up the other side.*

*The ballroom turns into my wedding reception. A high school classmate, a computer software specialist wearing a fancy tuxedo, appears.*

Will he give me the program for achieving happiness in relationships like the intimate couple in night wear?

*Later, he ascends on the escalator at the Civic Center subway station.*

.....

The question in the parking lot: Can rearranging external circumstances construct an elusive balance?

The answer: Loving relationships and humane work emanate from the center of our being, from within.

## THE GAME

*From my hand/first-hand,*

I recognize a long-time fear —  
winning at work  
will cost in love.

Afraid  
if I play the ace,  
I will lose the game.

## WHAT A RACKET

*Mr. Right-of-the-Moment talks on the telephone, trying to reach a woman. He writes a message and signs it "Simpson."*

Why does he act with duplicity?

.....

*On an airplane with two men, I give each a different racket.*

*One is metal, one is wood — like my two tennis rackets.*

## MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR

*A faded red MG, like our friend drove when my lawfully-wedded husband abandoned me for her, rolls in front of my car.*

*The vehicle ahead of mine stops the sports car — just as my next romantic liaison deadened the pain of a splintered marriage.*

*Around the corner, a car catches fire. Someone pours out the gasoline.*

*A robber breaks into a windowless rec shelter. I call for help, escaping while others tarry.*

*On the beach, a child plays.*

*A yellow-white flash of light, like nuclear war, fills the sky.*

When friends make love with friends' lovers, they make war with friends.

War scares kids.

## NO PARKING

Tonight, a date with a new love interest. He is short, pugnacious, reeling from a painful divorce.

*A bulldog and a red line painted on the curb in front of my apartment appear on my dream screen.*

The warning signals impinge on the thrill of romance.

The conflict endures between pre-determinism and free will, between guidance and disobedience. The debate about our will and God's will is no longer an existential exercise.

Experientially, I know: We choose what will bring disaster or delight.

## MODERN MEDICINE

## SOCIETY SAYS

*Riding in a bus to my former gynecologist's office,  
I sit in the handicapped section.*

*The driver says disparagingly, "Ugh, you're disgusting.  
Around your mouth is dirty, and you have lesions on  
your skin."*

The man driving the bus — Society — berates  
women who speak out.

The next day the doctor calls, announcing an  
abnormal Pap test result.

The dream, an internal female exam, reveals  
embodied cultural condemnation.

Even though I renounced hurts from sullied  
romantic relationships, I still harbor indelible wounds.

People donning B.U.M. Equipment sweatshirts  
literally wear their attitudes on their sleeves. I carry  
mine inside.

---

*I play leapfrog with Mr. Right-of-the-Moment.  
Squatting like a frog, he waits for me.*

*Then, he leaps over my back, a prophecy of my fate  
with an imaginary prince.*

## PINK AMARYLLIS

*In a newsroom, no, it's a bank, desks fill the  
loan section.*

*Co-workers gather, napping rather than  
reading newspapers.*

*"I'll go to sleep, too," I say.*

*Frida is here. An amaryllis adorns her desk.*

*The beautiful, open flower is pink.*

*Shocking pink. Vibrant pink.*

*Now sitting on my left hand,*

*I admire the pink flower,*

a delicate reminder of desired mending and  
emotional flowering.

## CONSCIOUSNESS CURE

Fear about the abnormal cells plagues me.

*I wake up in an operating room. No, the space  
is a kitchen. I put a big wire whisk in the center of a  
silver flower. Now, the object is a cookie cutter, a metal  
container.*

I am cutting out unwanted images from memory,  
from the past.

## ROOTS

*I live on an island.*

*It is the house where I grew up.*

*Gold sconces on the hallway wall contain the source  
of health maladies.*

The planters hold the seeds of my belief society  
disparages women desiring a happy family life and a  
successful career.

## DONUT W/HOLE

*Donuts fill two glass plates on a cafe table: one donut  
with a hole; the other, dusted with powdered sugar, solid.*

*Like a beignet from the French Quarter in New  
Orleans, the solid donut looks normal.*

*I choose the whole donut, not the donut with the hole.*

I choose wholeness.

## TRIVIAL PURSUITS

*Someone asks, "What color is Manhattan clam  
chowder, red or white?"*

Why, I wonder, do we waste time in trivial pursuits?

## BIBLICAL TREATMENT

*A tent preacher performs a miracle on a blind man.  
His powers impress me, and I want him to heal me.  
Holding down the preacher, I persevere until he  
performs a miracle on me.*

Through the Biblical-like cure, abnormal cells in the  
nub of womanhood disappear.

## INSIDE

*A shadowy figure climbs the flight of stairs, kicks  
aside a brightly colored toy train so no one will trip.*

*The train bangs against a wall.*

*The phantasm enters a house and a small area,  
looks at the pure, impressionable baby in a crib, and  
raises the side to protect the child.*

(Inserting interpretations) conjures a healing  
formula:

Change the train of thought  
dominating your life,  
change your behavior,  
activate the deep, loving part of  
the Self  
and  
find your self.

(Or, perhaps, activate the deep, loving part of your  
self and find the Self)

## WORDS

In the dream, a voice speaks enigmatic words:

*“We don’t have very much caring in California,  
do we?”*

## CATCH-22

*A board game, like Concentration or Memory, is missing. A college roommate asks the location.*

*In the closet, perhaps.*

*A box called Time or Monopoly fills the shelf.*

*The top is open.*

Since college, a game of self-defeating thoughts and attitudes derailed desires and abilities.

The game is over, and a Catch-22 ensues, a gap between what existed and the experience of what existed.

An opportunity looms to explore life, create a relationship with the Self, and encounter deep-seated feelings and hidden ideas.

In mind contests, the imagination holds the power of change.

TIME is the name of the game,  
and the lid is off.

## FIELDS OF GRAIN

What will lead to healthy living?

*A sheaf of wheat blowing in the wind appears on my dream screen.*

The same design decorates a flyer for a vegetarian cooking class, signaling the way.

Its bedrock, the Eating Plan from the Garden of Eden, prescribed in the Bible.

## MAXIWELL

*The word MAXIWELL.*

MaxIwell,

    a mantra-in-the-making:

I maximize well-being.

I maximize my well-being.

I maximize well-being.

The soundings of a primordial secret:

    The potential to heal dwells within.

## FALL OF THE BEST WESTERN

*A Best Western motel collapses.*

Is this the fall of Western medicine?

I feel the power of dreams and imagine health care  
unlike modern medicine.

Now, I wonder: Can frames of mind cause and  
cure illness?

The premise of the night time apparition:

Thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs — images  
appropriated from family and society — affect  
well-being.

Changing the image can change our life.

THE DIVINE



## GUIDE OF DREAMS

*The gourmet chef recommends Mitzi, a cooking shop proprietor.*

*Her location is near a square or park.*

*“Oh, MacArthur Park perhaps?”*

*“No,” she responds, “further over.”*

*Toward the financial district, near the center, near the heart of the city?*

*“Yes,” she says. “It’s inconvenient from the north, but accessible from the east.”*

East, Eastern, the hallowed sector.

Mitzi, from mitt, a form of protection.

Mitzi, from the Hebrew mitzvot, good deeds linking the physical and the sacred.

Mitzi, the Divine Spirit in every soul.

## PILLOW TALK

*A dark-haired, handsome man, dressed like a soldier, lies on the floor, kissing a blonde-haired woman.*

The scene resembles Rock Hudson and Doris Day in an old-time movie.

## DEFINITELY SPIRITUAL

*A pair of Oriental slippers, the black variety from Chinatown, covers feet clothed in bright blue iridescent socks.*

## BACK TO ART

*She warns, "No more gross men. I'm going back to Art."*

With her husband Art, she acts herself.  
She says "I," but she counsels:  
Abandon the senseless (bulldog) relationship and  
return to Art,  
your true Self.

## TIGER IN THE TANK

*At the Tam Junction Arco station, a tiger fills up the gas tank.*

*Now, the tiger fills the tank.*

In Chinese horoscopes, in Eastern lore, the tiger protects life.

The tiger resides inside.

## OWED TO DREAMS

*Dreams, a wellspring of creativity,  
a reservoir of ideas.*

*Wisdom flows from an Inner Source,  
revealing endless answers  
to waking quandaries and questions.*

*Where fear once ruled,  
confidence reigns.*



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joyce Lynn is a journalist, speaker, and advocate for the empowerment of women.

After eight years as a political reporter in Washington, D.C., Joyce moved to San Francisco, where she recalled her first dream, ever. It redirected her path toward helping women use dreams for well-being.

When Joyce faced a health crisis, dreams were the place where healing happened. Dreams continue to guide all aspects of her life.

She is founder and editor of the online publications, *Political Diary*, *Plum Dreams Journal*, and *IS*, integrating information, intuition, and imagination for positive change. Her incisive stories and profiles help readers learn the truth of an issue. As a result, hers is a voice seldom heard in the media.

Joyce holds a Bachelor's degree in education and a Master's degree in communication. She was an assistant press secretary to a U.S. Representative and editor of a weekly newspaper.

Her mission: to share the power of dreams for our personal and social transformation.

In *PLUM DREAMS DIARY*, Joyce Lynn traverses life's vicissitudes on the wings of nocturnal poetry.

Through the words, images, and symbols of dreams, she takes the reader on a woman's search for fulfillment in a world of confusing cultural messages. She shares insights about mothers, men, modern medicine, and the nature of the Divine.

Honest and humorous, these dreams reveal perceptions of the contemporary female Psyche. They invite the reader to listen to the sleeping mind.

*"This collection of dreams takes us on a journey of redemption and healing."*

— Doreen Stock, poet,  
*The Politics of Splendor*

*"These dreams are poetry in the making."*

— Arlene Bernstein, author,  
*Growing Season: A Healing Journey into  
the Heart of Nature*

Journalist Joyce Lynn writes and advocates about the power of dreams to transform women's lives.