



# THE WAY OF THE ROSE

Sally Mathis O'Brien

A channeled conversation  
with Mary Magdalene



*Annually on July 22, the Feast of Mary Magdalene, a self-guided labyrinth walk is hosted at Gentlewood to celebrate the Divine Feminine in all of us.*

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Sally Mathis O'Brien  
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In my meditation, my faithful stead Winslow takes me to a flat ledge of a rocky mountain side. It is barren and may as well have been the moon if I wasn't able to breathe. We are on a slight incline. Then I notice the sound of water, and behind my right shoulder next to Winslow, a small waterfall trickles into a crevice below.

**Mary:** Sally, take my hand.

A woman's hand extends in front of the falls and I see Mary Magdalene on the other side. She has a soft smile, flowing brown hair and kind eyes.

**Mary:** Winslow will stay here. He will be fine. Follow me.

She leads me up the incline, walking slowly, helping me to maneuver through jagged rocks. She is practiced, knowing exactly where to place her foot and where to steady herself. She holds my right hand and my awkwardness is calmed by the path she has surely taken many times before. We come up to a wall of rock and just as I wonder, *How in the heck are we gonna...*, she ducks and slips left behind the wall, leading me into an inner passageway of a mountain.

After a short dark path, we are in the cavernous expanse of her grotto. *It's so big!* Watching my wonder, she faces me and let's go of my hand, backing into her home. It feels a little like a garden to me, even though there is nothing green and it's enclosed. As I admire the expanse of her cavern, she smiles at me.

**Mary:** I'm content here. *(She looks around the ceiling, waves her arms out as she turns)* I never feel alone.

She brings me to a rock ledge where I can sit down. For a few moments she is silent, allowing the scene to become clear in my inner vision.

**Mary:** I'm so glad you are here! I've looked forward to this.

In front of us a lamp materializes. **Where did she get a lamp?** It's not of this time. It reminds me of Aladdin's lamp. She takes the worn brass top off, lighting the dry wick by snapping it between her fingers, and sets it on a small stoop nearby. I notice that it's full of oil. She puts her hands together, closes her eyes and says a few words that I don't understand. She noticeably calms. She opens her eyes and there is something about her demeanor that calms me as well.

**Mary:** I'd like to share with you **The Way of the Rose.**

# THE RED ROSE



Mary rests her hands open in her lap, palm above palm, and takes on a more serious, thoughtful tone.

**Mary:**

All healing begins with the Red Rose.

And with this statement, a gorgeous long-stemmed red rose appears floating in front of me and between us, suspended mid-air and perfectly opened. The head of the rose blocks my vision of her face. I have an instant “flash” in my mind’s eye from my college sorority days. Our symbolic flower was the Red American Beauty rose. It looked just like this!

**Mary:** The Red Rose represents **inner connection**. It represents what and where you’ve come from: family, nature, community, culture. Everyone has roots from somewhere, otherwise we wouldn’t exist. The Red Rose represents the learning and experience of being human. It’s your primary potential.

*(The rose begins to turn slowly. I now notice some small tears and darkened spots.)*

People can triumph in the harshest conditions. Our narrative, our stories, can give us strength. We need to look back to our roots

to appreciate from where and how far we've come. That's what grounds us; where we find strength and courage. The story of our origin can be powerful and show us the way. Nothing is more potent than revisiting your roots and seeing anew.

At this point, the rose rises up to showcase its long stem. The stem begins to quickly "flash" in front of me as different types of rose stems appear and then disappear. Some have visible roots, others are neat cuts at the stem. Some have green stems, some more brown. Some covered with thorns, some without or stripped of their thorns. Some stems are giant and thick, others look more like the supple stem of a tea rose. Some have roots with fresh, fertile dirt loosely attached, while others look as if they were yanked out of hardened soil, deplete of nutrients. As I watch the stems the action begins to slow down, Mary continues.

**Mary:** We are each born into a life. That is a gift. The Red Rose is the first to remind us that its essential essence wouldn't be a rose without its roots, thorns, and leaves. A rose is much more than the head of its petals.

She is right, of course. Looking at life in the whole. Not getting too mired down by the day to day, even if the days seems to follow an unlucky course. Thoughts begin to float into my head about the current political strife. No one seems to be listening. So much judgment, blame. And gun violence. I become disheartened. Mary senses my thoughts. I realized that the rose stopped spinning, flashing. It hangs in the air; as beautiful as when I first saw it.

**Mary:** There are other roses that grow.

At this point, she flashes in my mind a garden with a glass hothouse a few yards ahead. I walk and approach the blooms from outside. The boxes are sitting on a wooden shelf. There are some ceiling light



bulbs but most of the light comes from the sun. The wooden table is full of flowers that look uniform and strong.

**Mary:** These roses look especially beautiful but their fragrance may not be as sweet. Notice that they are disconnected from the ground. They have their own soil but it doesn't run as deep.

Mary is in front of me now next to the hothouse. She hears my thoughts as I judge the flowers, unknowingly.

**Mary:** Are these roses any more or less than the one at the grotto?

**Sally:** They are ... different.

**Mary:** Yes, that's right! They *are* different. It's a great world out there, isn't it? That's the thing about judgment. It can narrow your vision. It can trick you into believing that you are seeing all that remains to be seen. But remember,

A rose doesn't judge who will receive its  
essence. Its nature is only to open, to share.  
That's its power. It is soft and strong.

**Sally:** Yes, it is powerful. Unmistakable. I understand. (*My eyes begin to fixate on a rosebud whose stem grew too quickly from the stalk and is listing, droopy.*) But some people are too hurt. It's hard for them to share. They have lost their connection.

# THE PINK ROSE



**Mary:** For those people, there is the **Pink Rose**.

And with that statement, we are back in the grotto, next to the lamp and a long-stemmed Pink Rose floats between us. I smile.

**Sally:** Pink has been a favorite color of mine for the past couple of years.

**Mary** (*broadly smiling*): We know that you love pink! How would you like to receive these roses? Would you like them here? (*The roses begin to act like puppets, standing at attention next to one another, as if they intend to begin a flower ballet.*) Or here?

The two roses forgo their spines, drifting softly down to lie between us. They lie horizontal to one another about a foot from me. The Red is close to me, the Pink about a foot beyond the Red. It creates the sense of a ladder. I like them like this.

**Mary** (*continues, more seriously*): You've needed the Pink Rose because you recalled some difficult memories and faced deep patterns in your life. **The Pink Rose serves to heal.** It offers gentleness, patience and companionship. While grief and loss are natural aspects to life, the Pink Rose represents hope that you can return to the path of healing whether it's internal or external. Notice that the color deepens towards the heart of the flower.

I grow silent looking at the rose. I think about my own difficulties over the past year, learning about events that I wasn't even aware had happened. I felt broken. I wasn't sure whether I wanted to forgive and I certainly didn't know how to forgive.

Mary leans into her elbows on the table, her head resting in her hands.

**Mary** (*softly*):

Trust is a muscle, much like the heart.  
It longs to be used. It longs to open.

I'm not sure how long we were silent, me staring at the rose and her staring at me.

**Mary:** The Pink Rose reminds us that support is everywhere. That it is best to reach out and ask for help. **Healing is a choice.** It is the most powerful choice you can make.

In my mind flashes a picture of a large rose bush, at least seven feet across, leaning against a stone wall. Beyond the wall is rolling hills. It could be anywhere but I get the sense it's somewhere in Great Britain. As I look closer, I see wooden stakes supporting some of the vines, and the scene now looks more like an Italian vineyard than a garden. *Wait, is the rose bush actually leaning? Or is simply near the wall?*

**Mary:** Even the oldest and surest of us needs help now and again. It is a sign of strength to reach out. People need to look to one another. Otherwise, how will they know the truth? How will they decide upon what is best? **Knowing your neighbors helps to inform you of the condition of your world.** Eyes, ears, and hearts must be open to attune to what is happening. Wouldn't you agree?

The picture disappears and I'm looking at Mary Magdalene with bright eyes, slightly raised eyebrows and a Mona Lisa smile on her face. *Did she always look this...sure? This serene?*

**Mary:** *No, of course not!* Every life has its challenges, Sally. It takes time. *(She stops to look away and ponder.)* Patience, practice, discipline. Study. And letting go. Lots of letting go. *(She returns to look me in the eyes).*

I reached out for help. I looked to my friends, became part of a community. It isn't always easy to recognize wisdom. Especially when you are hurting. **The Pink Rose is the bridge.**

The Pink Rose appears in front of me, and submits to her grasp. She lies it back down in front of the red.

**Mary:** The Red and Pink Roses work together. You choose to pick up your life work, and choose to heal fully. When healing becomes a practice, the path appears, wouldn't you agree? That is part of the Way.

*(She places both rose stems in my hands. I sense their connectedness.)*

What do the roses smell like? **Breathe deeply.** 'Ruach' [breath in Hebrew] is a practice to return to, again and again.

*(I wonder if she is referring to meditation but I decide to let it go. I close my eyes and breathe in deeply. To my surprise, I hear music! Some sort of bazaar.)*

**Sally:** It smells like... silk!? *(I surprise myself)* Like an ancient rich fabric, well worn.

*Mary smiles at this.*

# THE ORANGE ROSE



**Mary:** The next rose is **Orange**. It represents **innervitality**. Spark. With the connection of your past, and a deep sense of humanity in healing, you can embody your own individual passion.

The Orange Rose garners your ability to feel and be filled with your own sensuality.

The power of sensuality has been kept under a rock for far too long.

Passion is a truth. It cannot be hidden  
and it doesn't need defending.

In fact, it only becomes more powerful when it is denied. Passion is the scent of a rose. Whether the passion is from an individual or an entire culture, it's an energy that needs to be acknowledged, respected and freed.

The fragrance of the Orange, Red and Pink Roses waft through the air. *Strong and soft.*

Mary is about twenty yards away from me, and she begins to walk slowly toward the interior wall of the cave, head held high, extending both arms out, and smiling widely with pride.

The Orange rose is about inner beauty!  
The beauty that you exude when you are in touch  
with yourself; when you know who you are!

My head follows her walk, and I find myself thinking, "*Ladies and gentlemen! Miss Galilee, 2019!*" but before I can appreciate my humor, I look down to my lap, embarrassed.

**Mary:** Now would be a good time to breathe.

I obey and my cheeks turn pink.

**Mary** (*smiling*): Your cheeks know how to heal. You are feeling ashamed, perhaps? It's difficult to know how you feel sometimes, isn't it? You are not alone. What was it that Jesus told you? '**You need to feel to heal.**' It's so true.

**Sally** (*slowly looking up*): Yes, it is. I'm not sure I can learn how to feel the way you do.

**Mary:** I understand. Truly, I do. I once felt the way you do now. The Orange Rose is about **nourishment** – your femininity, your essence, what makes you stronger and softer at the same time. Open into your vulnerability. These things are important. And desperately needed.

She bends down and tenderly pushes a tress of my hair behind my ear.

The truth is that women have always  
felt broken, felt "less than," inadequate.

We were made to feel this way.

We learned this. Do you understand?

That is why it is especially important to look to one another for support and empowerment. This is where we most need to let go of the ties that bind us. We don't need to compare ourselves to one other. We need to come back to ourselves.

**Sally:** I understand. What if someone has problems...finding this feeling?

Mary gets up from where she is and begins to pace back and forth, hands behind her back, listening intently. I've seen this before. She looks like Jesus does when he becomes the rabbi.

**Mary:** Hmmm. Well, I'd say that someone has lost their way. What's it like up there?

**Sally:** Up *where?* (*I look around the cave*)

**Mary:** Up that tree. The tree you are in. It sounds like you are up there a bit too far, I'd say.

And just like that, Mary shape shifts from a teacher into a magician—  
And I'm suddenly swinging high up in the branch of an immense tree on a limb that clearly isn't meant to support my weight! Before I can get a chance to filter, I'm shouting, "**HOOLY SH\***—

**Mary:** —So, what's your vision like?

**Sally, shouting:** *My vision?! My VISION?!*

**Mary:** Yes. What can you see?

**Sally:** (*This is when I realize I don't need to shout. This is a metaphor after all. I've done numerous journeys. Are they really gonna let me fall and hurt myself?!*)

I'm surrounded by leaves and branches. I can't see a thing!

*What IS this thing, anyways?! A eucalyptus?! My mere thoughts make the limb sway further and I hold on harder for dear life.*

**Mary:** How is the breathing going?

**Sally, angrily:** Not funny, Mary! *Really.* Not funny!

**Mary:** I ask only because it must be difficult. To keep a proper perspective when you have lost your Way.

**Sally:** *(Oddly, the image of Charlie Brown comes to mind. This is how he must feel after Lucy takes the football away from him and he lands flat on his back. Drats! My pride begins to creep back.)*

Well, in my defense, the air does feel a bit thinner up here.

**Mary (smiling):** Uh-huh. *(She looks up)* I understand! Do you need some help?

**Sally (sheepishly):** Yes. Yes, I do.

**Mary:** Great! It's right here!

**Sally:** Great! *(A few seconds pass. This is a **really good** metaphor!).*  
Mary, nothing's happening.

*(By this point, I usually snap out of these things!)*

**Mary:** Well, I think it's best that you climb down the tree before you get hurt. Or hurt somebody else below you.

I begin to carefully descend, making sure to make full contact at each step, as Mary shares her perspective.

**Mary:** You know the truth is, the help was all around you. Spirit always has your back, is always present. You just need to ask for it. And the help is on the ground. There are several people you can seek support from when you reach out; there are always friends. In fact, there is even help available *under* the ground.

Mary's under ground comment occurs precisely when I land, jumping from the lowest branch, about 4 feet up. I'm ready to kiss *terra firma* when I notice beautiful white webbing drifting into the earth from below our feet. It looks like white sea grass. The ground has turned



into a glass field, and below our level are shining white traces of light, like energetic ribbons attached to our body! It's stunning! It almost looks like we are each wearing a white ball gown, as we glide across the glass. It hits me what we are looking at. And it's *amazing! It's our an—*

**Mary:** *That's right! These are our ancestors! Your body bears the blueprint of a beautiful lineage, waiting to be honored and opened. They are always there ready to listen and support, bearing witness. When you heal, when you ground yourself, you do the same for them as well. Isn't that marvelous!*

Are you able to feel again?

**Sally:** Good question. *(I take a deep breath. I breathe again. I begin to feel my feet activate a bit.)* Yes.

**Mary:** Good because I think you will understand things a little more clearly once we talk about the Yellow Rose. The Roses don't work in isolation. They are especially active when you are going through a transition or when the weather in your life shifts. Let's take a walk outside.

I follow Mary out the mouth of the cave as the glass vaporizes back into a rocky floor.

Outside, we are back in the world of rocks but they are smaller and easier to walk upon. It's a little hazy outside but bright and I can see a giant tree ahead. I'm relieved to see it's an oak.

**Mary:** The Way of the Rose is a message. It's a way to practice awareness of yourself. It's about returning to the heart of the matter so that awareness can lead to your awakening. You see the Roses as a ladder. We see it as a constellation of concepts, or as you might say, levels of consciousness.

You recently went to the mountain, my grotto in France on a pilgrimage. You said yourself that life is a pilgrimage, is it not?

# THE YELLOW ROSE



**Mary:** Yes! Well, it's a perfect time to introduce the Yellow Rose. This is where your self-love is cultivated so you can begin to share your energy with the world. You grow your desire to serve. The Yellow Rose is a presence, an orientation and a readiness; a ground of being in a way that is authentic to who you are and how you want to live.

The Yellow Rose is about will. It is the marriage of passion and compassion.

This is a place where you embody the internal you. Witness yourself. Trust in the seat of your personal power so that no matter what the winds of change bring you, you are anchored in the roots of your strength. Trust is the unity of love and will. This is the place that powers your purpose and creates confidence.

I grow quiet. I question my strength. It can be difficult for me to trust. I feel I often waiver between sharing too much of myself or hiding behind my fears, unable to discern what is what. I walk alongside Mary who is so self-assured, looking ahead to the oak.

**Mary:** Sally, you are a 'feeler.' You always have been. Many people are. It's important to learn to separate the outside world from what is real for you. It's hard sometimes to know if what you

are feeling is yours or if it belongs to someone else. Boundaries require attention and intention. The separation allows you to have a cloud of compassion between you and the world. Breathe into your own space. Let yourself open into your own beliefs, values and meaning.

Honoring your beliefs allows you to serve others in a way that respects your own needs.

You were not shown much love and you weren't taught love when you were young. You must learn to love yourself in order to practice your will. Honoring what you most desire about yourself. This is the Yellow Rose. Your will determines how you meet your challenges and reveals choices that are before you. There is always a choice.

Remember that a peaceful mind  
will follow an open heart.

I noticed our pace has matched, our legs extending at the same time and landing in unison. As we approach the tree, Spirit turns its image into a type of living x-ray: I can see tiny nutrients climbing upwards through the roots, inching up from the core and beneath the bark. The leaves then begin to advance in time, as I walk the perimeter around its great branches. I am in a movie, watching the progression of seasons before my eyes. Mary stays behind, speaking to me with a voice I knew was paying homage to its beauty and strength.

**Mary:** Trees are nature's grand example of cycles. They stand strong, and no matter the weather they take in what is needed and share with the world around them, giving and taking. They support an entire community within and around their physical space.

After seeing the rapid seasons run through the leaves, flowers and branches, my vision opens to the entire energetic signature of all living things inside and around the tree, large and small! It was a fantastic panorama of life! There is hardly a separation of tree, insect, ground or auras.

**Mary:** Observing and honoring our own cycles is a beneficial step to understand the love that we need to feed. Recognizing the times we need to retreat, shed, stretch and grow, push our roots, and reach for nutrients is a vital lesson. (*She now looks to me.*) Being a feeler is a wonderful thing, Sally.

In fact, feeling your feelings, being fully present,  
is the most courageous thing you can do.

And with that statement, *I become a tree!*

I can see and feel my energetic roots grow into the ground, ancestral ribbons shimmering like white auroras below my feet. I feel the immense safety and sanctuary of the dirt – I am deeply rooted. I can feel the inching of nutrients, blood, lymph moving up and down throughout my body and energetic waves shooting out the crown of my branch-head. I can even feel energetic layers caressing my skin. What an exquisite feeling!

**Mary** (*excited, her hands reaching out to me*): **Breathe, Sally. Breathe!** *This* is who you are! This is your will, your essential nature. You are a child of God, of Spirit! You are one with the universe.

**Sally** (*ecstatic and a bit dazed*): I feel alive! Connected. Eternal!

**Mary:** *That's right! You are eternal!*

Just as quickly, I return back to my human self, looking at Mary, no longer a tree.

**Mary** (*waits a moment and becomes more serious*):

It's important to observe the cycles of your life. This is a primary source of wisdom. Your life wants to share what it knows with you.

Mary then looks at the sky and suggests it is time to head back. I'm feeling invigorated and lighter as we walk together, and I bubble over with questions. What about when things get hard? The truly unexpected happens? What about when things hit us out of the blue and we don't understand what's required to move forward? After about five minutes of my random questions, I realize I haven't given Mary a chance to even respond and...*wait a minute! Didn't we just pass these same rocks a few moments ago?!*

**Sally:** I think we've gone over this path already.

**Mary:** Yes.

**Sally:** We have, haven't we?!

**Mary** (*smiling*): Twice.

**Sally:** *Twice?!*

**Mary:** Yes. It's OK. Just because you are going over the same path doesn't mean you aren't learning something. Maybe this time you notice a flower. Maybe you see a crevice. I sense you are frustrated. Maybe on the first passage you were too busy to notice, maybe it was too frightening. Maybe there is a lesson that you need to be reminded of. Perhaps you weren't fully connected to the path or your experience.

When we don't feel into the present moment, life brings the moment back to us, hoping it will be recognized. This is the work of recognizing patterns.

Looking into our ways of doing and being that are waiting to emerge and evolve. Taking responsibility for how we relate to the world and being compassionate with ourselves so we can help others on their journey. This is being on the path. Being fully in relationship with ourselves and with others. There are ways to find greater ease on the path.

**Sally:** Like what?

**Mary:** Like your compass! There will always be a physical compass, but yours is a spiritual compass. It helps light the way. You can slow down. You can take some time out to reflect. Try a different path. And there is always the Pink Rose. Even walking with a friend can be such a help!

Mary slips her right arm through my left and we walk together into the grotto entrance. We head back to the Roses and she picks up the bouquet as fresh as the day they were cut: Red, Pink, Orange and Yellow. She fully extends them to me, a gift, and I gratefully grasp them with both hands, leaning in to breathe their heavenly scent. I pull back and Mary wraps her hands around mine, squeezing our hands together into the stems as my skin gets pricked by several thorns.

I feel the pain and my blood begins to trickle down the stems. Our hands remain clasped.

**Mary:** **There is beauty in suffering.**

I am struck by her comment. I look deeply into her smile. The symbolism isn't lost on me, just speaking about relationships, patterns, the give and take of life, cycles. I choose to not open this koan, especially when it's hard to feel past the pain.

# THE GREENERY



As I take a deep breath, the Greenery and local branches begin to grow and wrap around my hands at the same time Mary slides out hers. The leaves begin to caress my skin as the stems warm my palms. Energetically, I could feel the leaves release an essence, and this same energy seeped into the thorns where they were embedded in my flesh. Mary re-wraps her hands around mine, and opens them. The tiny punctures disappeared! My hands felt new.

**Mary: Green is so very important to the world.**

It's the color of plants, foliage, algae and it's a color in the center of the body. It's the color that feeds and heals. Even money. It's just a tool but when used in the right way, it also feeds and heals. Connecting with nature is a way to stay in right relationship with yourself. Your body, mind and spirit long to be in nature and you know what? Nature wants us to enjoy her! Being in nature, whether it's water, earth, forest, even fire, is a way to nourish the Red Rose in all of us. Nature is protective and makes us feel safe.

Greenery reminds us to go back to our beginnings. That often, the basics are best.



You know, when I first came here, there was no water. I had to ask for it. I prayed.

I immediately hear a rush of water on the other side of the grotto.

Let's go over here.

On the far side of the grotto, towards a rise near the back wall, there is a gush of water that is coming out from an extended rock and into another crevice about a foot below it. It looks a bit odd and out of place. It looks like something that was granted as an answer to a prayer. *A holy faucet!*

**Mary:** This is living water. It is a gift and a blessing. May I have your hands?

*I give my hands to Mary, palms up.*

# THE BLUE WATER



**Mary** (*takes my hands and meets my eyes*):

Blue is the color of water. It is most sacred.

Water is spirit. It is a purifier. Perhaps we take water most for granted. We mustn't. All things require water. Mountains seek water. The tiniest of plants, animals. There is no greater blessing than water.

The heart is like a river. It seeks to move, to open and to bend. It seeks to rush and give. Even when it is restricted, it longs to give. It waits. It enjoys giving life to everything it touches.

Mary is carefully stroking my hands and caressing each finger with the living water. She never takes her gaze from the task. Her touch is loving, soft and continuous. The thought occurs to me that I am receiving a baptism, a baptism from Mary Magdalene herself! I feel a ripple in my chest and tears begin to flow.

**Mary** (*with a tender smile and softened eyes*):

Tears are the most sacred of living waters.

They are messages from our heart that travel to our eyes. They come through our eyes because they are meant to be seen.

They are tiny gifts to those that you are with, telling them, “you are so loved!” Tears are important. Just as suffering is a part of life, so are tears. Tears are a beautiful example of soft and strong.

**Mary** (*placing a hand against my cheek*):

Make friends with your tears, Sally.  
They ease your heart and soften the Path.

Everyone is equal in that there are hardships to endure. We learn through our life lessons. But there is so much joy, too! Blue is a color that reminds us to seek balance and moderation on the Path. Blue is the cooling waters of forgiveness and grace. It is the color of truth. Truth that builds trust in yourself.

**Mary** (*gently holds my wet hands in hers*): The purpose of water is to cleanse and make clear. Clarity allows you to live your truth, share your voice, walk with strength and clear your Path.

She then takes the edge of her wrap and begins to dry my hands as tenderly as she bathed them. She leaves my tears to dry on my cheeks and my mood lightens as she begins to talk about the food on the small bushes nearby that feed her. She becomes chatty, explaining how she was surprised by how delicious the white wafers were, though a bit goeey, to take off the branch. She asks if I'd like to try one and before I agree to taste, a sweet thing is melting on the center of my tongue. It *is* sweet! It's about the size of a quarter and it tastes rich, like a nutritious wafer.

We returned together to the other side, now moving closer to the mouth of the cave.

We look outside in silence; the sun is setting and the colors of dusk paint the sky.

**Mary, smiling:** This is a favorite time of day for me.

**Sally:** Tell me.

**Mary:** When I look out at the sun and watch the change of colors it makes me so grateful. I feel an ease when I look at the light and watch it walk away. It's almost like the day is waving its hand to me, saying, "So long! I so enjoyed your company today!"

We are silent watching the nighttime color edge in from above. In my heart, I feel content and thankful for our time together. The silence feels like a shawl wrapped around my shoulders.

**Mary:** After sunset, I begin to tire and I let that feeling rise up in me. Tiredness. It's like a gentle wave that laps in and back from the shore of my body, creeping in like a tide.

I become tired listening to Mary's apt metaphors. She raises a hand and crisply snaps her fingers. Behind us a few lit candles appear. *What else can she do with the snap of her fingers?!*

**Mary:** Are you a dreamer, Sally? Do you remember your dreams?

**Sally:** Yes, sometimes. Especially if I have a dream right before waking.

**Mary:** Remember your dreams. Look at your dreams. They are important. They are your mind eavesdropping on your life, especially the little things going on behind the scenes.

Dreams are a fine example of **Purple**.

# THE PURPLE WORLD-BETWEEN



Purple is the color of what I call  
the “world-between.”

**Mary:** This is an area you have excelled at in recent years. It’s available to all of us. It’s an interesting place because it is a bit of a paradox.

**Sally:** How so?

**Mary:** It’s a world that wants to be engaged but it seems to come out when you least expect it or most let go. It’s you wanting you to see another side of you. It’s the curious one. It’s those moments...I think you call them “aha” moments...the feeling you’ve met that person before...the smell that takes you back to childhood but you’re not quite sure where. It’s the feelings that arise and retreat when you are meditating. It’s your curious self that taps on your shoulder and disappears when you turn around. But you can hear it giggling!

**Sally:** You’re talking about intuition. Right?

**Mary:** Intuition is part of it. An important part of it, to be sure. But it's more than intuition. It's paying attention to the background of things. Our spirit is seeking to live itself through us, and as humans, we can only take in so much. The world between is something we invite by first letting go of the constant need to track so much, stop and just listen. Instead of wrestling so much with life, taking the time to take the spinning plates off the sticks and instead, placing them on the table. Taking a seat at the table.

In my mind's eye, Mary reveals the image of her taking two spinning plates off the top of tall sticks I am frantically spinning, and she places them down at a dinner table. The plates are at rest and she invites me to join her in the cave. The solo circus act in my mind turns into an intimate setting for two.

This time, the image in my mind becomes a reality. Mary sits opposite from me at a wooden table. The Aladdin's lamp sits at one end. It's lit. I notice it's still full of oil. She gets up from the table and retrieves a blue glass vase filled with water. She places the same fresh roses into the vase and their roots immediately appear and grow into the water.

**Mary:** Purple allows this world to come to us in whispers, in dreams, and sometimes in gut punches. Sometimes they show up as a person. It's ours for the taking, we just need to slow down and let go.

**Sally:** How does someone find this world?

**Mary:** It's important to open yourself up to it. If you want more dreams and to remember them, ask and pray for that before you lie down to sleep. I call this time the golden time. Right before bed. Become more mindful through prayer, contemplation, meditation, whatever allows your mind to quiet down. Observe things. Step

outside of yourself a little. Surrender judgment. Let go of whatever you are really wanting to happen to make room for whatever is trying to appear. The world between can be a master of disguise. And very shy. But she's there.

The key is to be present to the present moment. Like the rest of the Roses, presence is fundamental.

What was the key for you?

**Sally:** The daily Deepak-Oprah guided meditations. In the beginning it was just a relaxing exercise. Quieting. I love the daily photograph and writing the journal questions. Then I began to see myself on a hill after a few months, in my mind's eye, within the meditation. I realized I was feeling calmer day to day because I kept up with the practice. When I got upset, it wouldn't stick like it used to. Then the horse showed up behind me.

**Mary** (*smiling*): Winslow. Yes, what you describe is true. A slow process of calming your mind, opening your heart and letting go. It's different for everyone and it's something that can be cultivated.

We both hear Winslow neigh outside the cave. We smile at one another. My eyes blink more slowly.

Mary gets up to bring tea to the table.

**Mary:** The world is a table and everyone is invited to it. Whether it is to share meals or to share ideas on how to best tackle problems together. In community. The truth is that we are all connected. There is no separation, there is no real "me" only "we." This is the beauty of the White Rose.

# THE WHITE ROSE



The White Rose represents purity and divinity. It's the part of us that has never known harm or darkness.

**Mary:** There are many names for this part. I call it the soul.

A beautiful White Rose materializes in the air and slowly drifts down into my hands. It has no thorns. As I turn it, I notice its color is uniform and the petals are perfectly formed. The Green leaf stems are a bit longer than the others.

**Mary:** The White Rose represents unity. Wholeness. Non-separation. It's purity, *our purity*, that is never separate from God. We are a part of Source and it is in us, always. You don't need to earn your way to the table. It became your birthright the moment you were born. There is no brokenness. Just confusing beliefs, many that are rooted in powerful ancient stories. When you judge others, you believe yourself to be better or different, only to make yourself lonely. When you judge yourself, you accept a version of yourself as being unworthy. More loneliness. It can be a confusing world of myth and illusions. Some stories serve, others don't. Stepping out of the stories is when real discovery can happen.



The world is meant to serve the light because we ARE the light!  
The White Rose invokes the purity of the original message:

That we were all born of love  
because we all are love.

Let go of the false perceptions and constructs and let in forgiveness.  
Open the door of your fear and you will find a path that looks  
much like one you've already been on.

I promise that when you lose  
the fear you will find the wonder.

Listen to your heart first because it understands this union. The  
White rose tells us that being and doing are one, giving and taking  
are versions of the same action, and the light never leaves us. No  
matter how dark the times, it is there because it simply is the part  
of us that can't be extinguished. Together at the table, together at  
communion, we are united. Love is the unifier.

Mary blows out the light in the lamp.

**Mary:** It's time for you to rest. You've listened and learned a lot.  
That takes a lot of energy! Lie your head down on the table. Come  
back and see me.

Remember, I am here for you.

As I lie down my head, I feel Winslow's mane and warm neck, and  
fall fast asleep.

# THE ROSES

The Roses are a source of wisdom & direction. They work in and with one another; Roses do not operate in isolation.



**WHITE**  
**Divine Connection**

soul, purity, wholeness and non-separation.



**YELLOW**  
**Self-Love**

passion + compassion, will, personal desires.



**PURPLE**  
**The "World Between"**

intuition, curiosity, mindfulness, prayer, practice.



**ORANGE**  
**INNER VITALITY**

nourishment, vulnerability, cloud of compassion.



**BLUE**  
**Living Waters**

cleansing + making clear, balance, faith, forgiveness.



**PINK**  
**HEALING**

gentleness, patience, support, finding peace.



**GREEN**  
**Nature/Natural**

being one with nature, the path as primary sources of wisdom.



**RED**  
**Inner Connection**

"All healing begins with the red rose," origin, safety, groundedness.

# ABOUT SALLY



Sally Mathis O'Brien is a rare combination of religious docent and spiritual navigator. She received her master's degree in Pastoral Studies from Seattle University in preparation for a second career in hospital chaplaincy, when a multiple sclerosis diagnosis took her in an uncharted direction as an advocate and teacher. As a natural meditator, she communes in the

world of the ascended masters including Mary Magdalene, Gandhi, Leonardo DaVinci and the Dalai Lama. As a toolmaker, she takes the lessons from her conversations and experiments in mediumship and applies her talent to different forms of healing, including body-speak, self-compassion exercises, and ancestral work. Her personal experience from family trauma of alcoholism, codependency, and incest lend authenticity to the depths of her empathy. Her travels alone from the "sticky" labels of bipolar illness and MS – from disease to dis-ease to health to wellness – are worth the read.

A gritty and at times hilarious counselor and writer, she offers something magical to anyone in search of wholeness and light: a path to your own inner lighthouse.

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