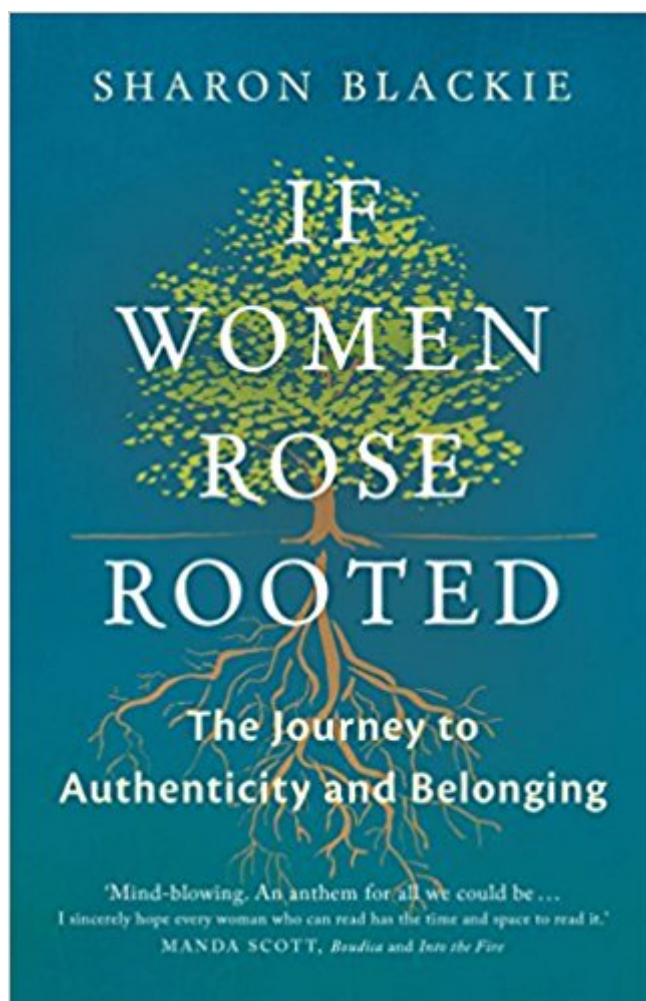


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# If Women Rose Rooted: A Journey To Authenticity And Belonging



## Synopsis

2016 Nautilus Award Silver Winner in the Women category "I love this book. Truly, it's mind-blowing in the most profound and exhilarating sense." #151;Manda Scott, author of Boudica and Into the Fire This is the second edition of a uniquely empowering, international word-of-mouth bestseller about wild landscapes, female mythology, and the challenges facing modern women. It is a book for any woman who has ever lost her way and who sees a wasteland at the heart of modern existence and longs to live a more authentic, rooted life once again. Sharon Blackie is a writer, storyteller, and psychologist who lives in the hills of Donegal, Ireland.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Sharon Blackie is a writer, storyteller and psychologist, and has an wide international following through her Singing Over the Bones online community and her editorship of the nature writing magazine EarthLines. She lives in the hills of Donegal, Ireland. As well as her popular blog, Sharon's large Facebook reach and active Twitter correspondents gives Sharon fans across the globe, from ANZ to USA.

I love this book! A personal Heroine's journey, an intimate portrait of the shape and spirit of the land, and so much ancient wisdom in the Celtic stories. It is most profoundly a call to women to reclaim their native power and wild genius to bring the Earth and our selves back to wholeness, holiness. Quoting Jeanette Armstrong: "When we way the Okanagan word for ourselves, we are actually

saying 'the ones who are dream and land together.' There are wonderful poems and provocative questions for the reader: After telling the story of the Selkie, the author asks In what ways have you lost your skin? How did you lose it? Are you wearing a false skin? I felt so inspired and hopeful after reading the journey of psychologist and storyteller Blackie finding her way back to her wild soul, I almost want to change the title to WHEN women rise rooted. Because it is possible, it is happening, and books like this are precious trail guides. This is one of the new stories, one that tells us how to be brave and bold and powerful. Unlike the Hero's individual quest and journey, we are rooted in both the land and community. Our voices, our songs, can sing life back to the rootless Wasteland of modern civilization. Especially as Elders, we can and must speak for the Earth, for life. ""If there is to be a change, it will come from us. Right here. Where we stand. Women were always the story-givers, the memory-keepers, the dreamers. Listen now to the lands long dreaming. Do you see what it's dreaming? It's dreaming you." (p. 361)

This remarkable book could have been three distinct and absorbing works: an autobiography, a history of Celtic heroines, both mythical and real, and a persuasive plea for women to lead mankind in adopting a way of life that will preserve the earth for generations to come. Sharon Blackie seamlessly interweaves the three to make the whole greater than the sum of its parts. She was born and raised in England in the industrial northeast where I had my first job as a professional chemist in the 1960s and experienced pollution first hand. Drapes disintegrated after a year. The river Tees was acidic, greenish-brown, and iron laden from my employer's process to make, ironically, whiter than white titanium dioxide. Blackie describes her difficult working class childhood there, her abusive father who left when she was three and her alcoholic mother, in few words but with heartbreaking dispassion. She rose from this to a PhD in neuroscience, and employment with a major international tobacco company, which is how I came to know her almost thirty years ago. She worked at both its English and American headquarters. Living, as she has subsequently, restoring and running a croft in Ullapool in northwest Scotland, then, when that town became gentrified, battling the gales and hard manual labor on another croft on the stormy side of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, are a far cry from the comforts of a regular salary and first-class travel. After four years there, she and her second husband David, a former RAF Tornado pilot who breaks all stereotypes one might expect, gave up the struggle of running their large croft, and moved to the tranquility of Donegal in the northwest of Ireland. Through the crofting years she and David, who I have not met, also founded and managed Two Ravens press and published EarthLines magazine. As an Anglo Saxon male in his mid-seventies I was

unlikely to pick up a book on Celtic heroines. I am glad they provide the core of *If Women Rose Rooted* for the lessons their lives provide. For these alone I would recommend that my contemporaries both read and purchase it for their daughters, granddaughters, nieces and great-nieces. Blackie uses these heroines, and what some of the few current surviving native peoples do in their cultures, as exemplars for what she encourages women around the world to do, even if living in our increasingly unlivable environment which, after Eliot, she names *The Wasteland*. Transformative power, and women's role in developing it to halt degeneration of our fragile environment is Blackie's third and major theme:

"Once upon a time, the people of our Celtic nations knew what the indigenous peoples of other lands knew: that our fate is inseparable from the fate of the lands we live on, and the fate of wider Earth.

"Women are spinners and weavers. Once we knew the patterns for weaving the world; we can piece them together again. Women can heal the Wasteland. This is what women do. This is our work.

While Blackie puts much of the blame for the Wasteland on the west's Judeo-Christian heritage and its support over the centuries for male domination in our society I am not convinced that this is the whole story. I am not scholar enough to argue with her, but do note, that male domination exists, with few exceptions, in most human societies, regardless of religion (spiritual path) or lack thereof. Even the Buddha, who with Jesus is one of two men I admire the most, has yet to see a female Dalai Lama. Hinduism may come closest to accepting female spiritual leadership with Ammaji, the hugging guru, and the currently best known, in the USA. It was the Bhagavad-Gita that Eliot, the Anglo-catholic, explores in the *Waste Land*. I believe he would have enjoyed Sally Kempton's *Awakening Shakti: The Transformative Power of the Goddesses of Yoga*. My intent with this minor criticism is not to detract from Blackie's call to arms. For all I know my remaining male chauvinism may be part of my genetic code, not my Judaeo-Christian upbringing, but that is irrelevant. Society needs to change its values for earth to return to Blake's green and pleasant land. Blackie herself is an eloquent exemplar as are many other women she describes of how we must change. May their numbers grow exponentially and may we men join and support them. Lance Reynolds

This is seminal literature for anyone who wants a refreshing perspective, a delightful reprieve, or a gentle, profound education. Discussing women's issues in a clear, approachable manner and with a deep foundation of equality and respect for all humans is a must, and this book walks that thin line of brutal honesty and unflinching objectivity, with a side of heartfelt love for all. A must read for all

humans.

Sharon Blackies insights are liberating to me, as a 68 year "American " woman who has spent a life working hard to have an authentic, Rooted voice in this society which is cocooned in a Patriarchal , Judo Christian sticky web.I recommend every woman, as well as every man read this book. For a woman the reasons are obvious, find your own self and voice in concert with Mother Earth. For men, hopefully, this book would help them to understand women and their true internal worth, beauty and value, as well as opening up to the grace and privilege of being on this amazing earth that we get to enjoy for a brief space of universal time.

Thought provoking and special book. The book is a must for anyone who wants to get some perspective on the power of woman from long ago. It also gives me hope that woman can help heal the planet.

If Women Rose Rooted is an essential read for the complexity of our time, a time of The Great Turning. It is a clarion call for women to embark on the Eco-heroine's Journey home to herself and especially her place in the world. There have been many written version's of the Hero's Journey and the mono-myth of rites of passage. Sharon questions those models for women and invites us to consider a story of pilgrimage home to self and place. I share this book with every woman who I think could be remotely interested.

This book changed my life. I was able to let go of a great deal of resentment toward the opposite sex and find a peace. I am so relieved and happy to begin to explore a rooted life of authenticity, The author feels like a friend, she is very gracious while not backing away from the truths of the way women have been treated throughout history. Absolutely read it!

This journey that Sharon describes has spoken to my life, and I look forward to how she brings this journey to an close. The earth based focus really speaks to me. We do belong to the land, and we would have a better world if everyone realized their connection.

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