

## Broken Open By Elizabeth Lesser

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*Broken Open By Elizabeth Lesser* 2020-06-07

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Broken Open Alm Books

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • This inspiring guide to healing and growth illuminates the richness and potential of every life, even in the face of loss and adversity—now updated with additional toolbox materials and a new preface by the author In the more than twenty-five years since she co-founded Omega Institute—now the world’s largest center for spiritual retreat and personal growth—Elizabeth Lesser has been an intimate witness to the ways in which people weather change and transition. In a beautifully crafted blend of moving stories, humorous insights, practical guidance, and personal memoir, she offers tools to help us make the choice we all face in times of challenge: Will we be broken down and defeated, or broken open and transformed? Lesser shares tales of ordinary people who have risen from the ashes of illness, divorce, loss of a job or a loved one—stronger, wiser, and more in touch with their purpose and passion. And she draws on the world’s great spiritual and psychological traditions to support us as we too learn to break open and blossom into who we were meant to be.

*Staying True* Spiegel & Grau

Offers advice on the empowering and liberating experience of being alone, revealing how a woman can find meaning and fulfillment at every stage of her life without being a mother, wife, or girlfriend.

**The Way of Gratitude** Random House

Spirituality & Practice "Best Books of 2021" Award Winner Bank Street College of Education "The Best Children’s Books of the Year" Two sisters discover the power of love and the true meaning of compassion in this princess-adventure story based on an ancient Chinese tale. Miao Shan isn't your typical princess. She likes to spend her time quietly meditating with the creatures of the forest or having adventures with dragons and tigers. Miao Shan's heart is so full of love that her dream is to spread happiness throughout the land and help people endlessly. But her father has other plans for her--he intends to have her married and remain in the palace. With the help of her little sister Ling, Miao Shan escapes and begins her journey to discover the true meaning of compassion. During their adventure, Ling and Miao Shan are eventually separated. Ling must overcome doubts, fears, and loneliness in order to realize what her sister had told her all along--that love is the greatest power in the world. After the sisters' reunion, Miao Shan realizes her true calling as Kuan Yin, the goddess of compassion. A princess-adventure story like none other, this ancient Chinese tale of the world's most beloved Buddhist hero is a story of sisterhood, strength, and following your own path.

This Messy Magnificent Life Harmony

“Mother of the Unseen World is absolutely riveting, deeply searching, and thought-provoking.”—Gretchen Rubin For readers interested in the mysteries of spiritual awakening, an exploration of the Indian “avatar” Mother Meera, known as an embodiment of the Divine Feminine Throughout history there have been rare individuals who transcend what seems humanly possible, “enlightened” beings born with knowledge and experience that defy explanation. Kamala Reddy was a ten-year-old servant in rural India when her mysterious powers were recognized; she is believed to be an “avatar”—a divine incarnation in human form—and was soon given the name Mother Meera. Over the past forty years, she has welcomed millions of seekers from all faiths to have darshan (silent blessing) at her homes in Germany and India. Mother Meera has no dogma, offers her gifts free of charge, and belongs to no particular religion. Her transformational work is done using a particular light, she explains, which she transmits through her fingertips when she touches each person’s head during darshan, undoing “energetic knots” and quickening a person’s spiritual development. “Like electricity, the light is everywhere, but one must know how to activate it. I have come for that,” she says. Mark Matousek was a nonbeliever when he met Mother Meera in 1985. Yet, in her presence, he experienced inexplicable occurrences that forced him to challenge his worldview. Now, in this deeply moving and wise book, he takes us as close as

possible to this extraordinary woman. Is divine incarnation truly possible, he asks, as most of the world’s religions insist? Who is Mother Meera, really? Speaking to members of her inner circle, working at her school for the poor in India, and interviewing the elusive master herself, Matousek takes the reader on a mysterious quest into the “unseen world” where the divine and human intersect. Advance praise for Mother of the Unseen World “Mother of the Unseen World reads like a classic adventure novel, with one exception—much of the adventure goes on inside the reader as we follow Mark Matousek’s everyman journey from pain and doubt to discovery and awakening.”—Elizabeth Lesser, author of Broken Open and co-founder of Omega Institute “Mark Matousek brings us to the feet of Mother Meera in this transcendent, rapturous, astonishing book.”—Eve Ensler, author of The Vagina Monologues and In the Body of the World “At once a spiritual autobiography and an exploration of one of the most mystical beings of our time.”—Dani Shapiro “Mother Meera’s message of peace and love has touched me profoundly.”—Ringo Starr

**The Second Half of the Mountain** Ballantine Books

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • This inspiring guide to healing and growth illuminates the richness and potential of every life, even in the face of loss and adversity—now updated with additional toolbox materials and a new preface by the author In the more than twenty-five years since she co-founded Omega Institute—now the world’s largest center for spiritual retreat and personal growth—Elizabeth Lesser has been an intimate witness to the ways in which people weather change and transition. In a beautifully crafted blend of moving stories, humorous insights, practical guidance, and personal memoir, she offers tools to help us make the choice we all face in times of challenge: Will we be broken down and defeated, or broken open and transformed? Lesser shares tales of ordinary people who have risen from the ashes of illness, divorce, loss of a job or a loved one—stronger, wiser, and more in touch with their purpose and passion. And she draws on the world’s great spiritual and psychological traditions to support us as we too learn to break open and blossom into who we were meant to be.

**Kuan Yin** Anchor

What happens when you’ve done all you know how to do, the paved paths end, and you still feel like you’re missing something? The Second Half of the Mountain offers a practical and magical approach to recognizing and working with the deeper and often-confusing inner processes that happen after awakening. In this guidebook, McCall Erickson combines bits of personal story with the timeless building blocks of alchemy to outline the journey for the awakened traveler through the dark nights of the soul and beyond, not as “the way,” but as a guide to help you make your own way where it sometimes feels there is no way.

**The Calm Center** Monkfish Book Publishing

A Refinery29 Best Book of the Year The novel that inspired the acclaimed Rebecca Miller film Maggie's Plan, starring Julianne Moore, Ethan Hawke, and Greta Gerwig. Isabel, Anna, Beth, and Maggie are women who aren’t afraid to take it all. Whether spearheading a pregnancy lingerie company, conspiring to return a husband to his ex-wife, lusting after an old lover while in a satisfying marriage, or trying to balance motherhood and work—they are sexy, determined, and not looking for a simple happily ever after. Through punchy, hilarious, and insightful storytelling, The End of Men shatters the confines of society, and more importantly, those we impose upon ourselves. “With humor, bravery, and panache, Karen Rinaldi puts her finger straight on the tender conundrum of the female experience, where work, love, and motherhood intersect.” — Rebecca Miller, director of Maggie’s Plan "Karen Rinaldi's The End of Men is in every way marvelous. A sharply drawn story—or more accurately, stories—that gets everything right. Warm hearted but painfully close to the bone. " —Anthony Bourdain "In 1995, I wrote a short story, 'Baster,' inspired by some goings-on in my friend Karen Rinaldi's life. In 2003, that story, significantly altered, became the Jennifer Aniston-movie 'The Switch.' In 2016, another film, 'Maggie's Plan,' directed by Rebecca Miller, appeared, this time based partly on Rinaldi's unfinished novel about said events. And, now, Rinaldi has finished that novel, creating yet another version, her own version. I knew it was a good idea the first time I heard it, but I had no inkling it would prove quite so fruitful. Given

the subject matter, however, how could it be otherwise? Certainly, this is a story that keeps on giving." —Jeffrey Eugenides

**8 Habits of Love** Balboa Press

Geneen Roth, author of the #1 New York Times bestseller Women Food and God, explains how to take the journey to find one’s own best self in this “beautiful, funny, deeply relevant” (Glennon Doyle) collection of personal reflections. With an introduction by Anne Lamott, This Messy Magnificent Life is a personal and exhilarating read on freeing ourselves from daily anxiety, lack, and discontent. It’s a deep dive into what lies behind our self-criticism, whether it is about the size of our thighs, the expression of our thoughts, or the shape of our ambitions. And it’s about stopping the search to fix ourselves by realizing that on the other side of the “Me Project” is spaciousness, peace, and the capacity to reclaim one’s power and joy. This Messy Magnificent Life explores the personal beliefs, hidden traumas, and social pressures that shape not just women’s feelings about their bodies but also their confidence, choices, and relationships. After years of teaching retreats and workshops on weight, money, and other obsessions, Roth realized that there was a connection that held her students captive in their unhappiness. With laugh-out-loud humor, compassion, and dead-on insight she reveals the paradoxes in our beliefs and shows how to move beyond our past to build lives that reflect our singularity and inherent power. This Messy Magnificent Life is a brilliant, bravura meditation on who we take ourselves to be, what enough means in our gotta-get-more culture, and being at home in our minds and bodies.

**Marrow** HarperCollins

What story would Eve have told about picking the apple? Why is Pandora blamed for opening the box? And what about the fate of Cassandra who was blessed with knowing the future but cursed so that no one believed her? What if women had been the storytellers? Elizabeth Lesser believes that if women’s voices had been equally heard and respected throughout history, humankind would have followed different hero myths and guiding stories—stories that value caretaking, champion compassion, and elevate communication over vengeance and violence. Cassandra Speaks is about the stories we tell and how those stories become the culture. It’s about the stories we still blindly cling to, and the ones that cling to us: the origin tales, the guiding myths, the religious parables, the literature and films and fairy tales passed down through the centuries about women and men, power and war, sex and love, and the values we live by. Stories written mostly by men with lessons and laws for all of humanity. We have outgrown so many of them, and still they endure. This book is about what happens when women are the storytellers too—when we speak from our authentic voices, when we flex our values, when we become protagonists in the tales we tell about what it means to be human. Lesser has walked two main paths in her life—the spiritual path and the feminist one—paths that sometimes cross but sometimes feel at cross-purposes. Cassandra Speaks is her extraordinary merging of the two. The bestselling author of Broken Open and Marrow, Lesser is a beloved spiritual writer, as well as a leading feminist thinker. In this book she gives equal voice to the cool water of her meditative self and the fire of her feminist self. With her trademark gifts of both humor and insight, she offers a vision that transcends the either/or ideologies on both sides of the gender debate. Brilliantly structured into three distinct parts, Part One explores how history is carried forward through the stories a culture tells and values, and what we can do to balance the scales. Part Two looks at women and power and expands what it means to be courageous, daring, and strong. And Part Three offers “A Toolbox for Inner Strength.” Lesser argues that change in the culture starts with inner change, and that no one—woman or man—is immune to the corrupting influence of power. She provides inner tools to help us be both strong-willed and kind-hearted. Cassandra Speaks is a beautifully balanced synthesis of storytelling, memoir, and cultural observation. Women, men and all people will find themselves in the pages of this book, and will come away strengthened, opened, and ready to work together to create a better world for all people.

*Summary of Elizabeth Lesser's Broken Open* Waterside Productions

BONUS: This edition contains a Staying True discussion guide. In this candid and compelling

memoir, the first lady of South Carolina reveals the private ordeal behind her very public betrayal—and offers inspiration for anyone struggling to keep faith during life’s most trying times. She’s been a successful investment banker, a mother of four, and the campaign manager for one of American politics’ rising stars—her husband, Mark Sanford of South Carolina, once widely hailed as a possible candidate for president in 2012. Yet to most Americans, Jenny Sanford is best known for the one role she refused to play—that of conventional political spouse standing silently by while her husband went before the media and confessed his infidelity. Instead, she stayed true—to herself, to her faith, and to her highest ideals of parenthood and public service. She chose to let Mark Sanford deal with the embarrassment and political fallout from his own actions while focusing her own efforts privately on raising their children to be men of character, even in the face of the lies their father has told. In *Staying True*, Jenny Sanford recalls her shock and anguish upon discovering that her husband was having an affair with a woman in Argentina, and the further pain when she learned—just a day ahead of most Americans—that he had not ended the affair when she believed he had. She reveals the source of her determination to be honest and forthright instead of the victim in the tabloid passion play that gripped the nation in June 2009. But her story neither begins nor ends with Mark Sanford’s astounding fall from grace. Writing with uncommon candor from a deep well of spiritual strength, Sanford shares personal stories and life lessons from before and after she stepped into the public realm. She recounts the many stresses—as well as the myriad joys—that she experienced on a daily basis while living in the governmental spotlight. (Just try keeping four young boys out of mischief in the governor’s mansion!) And she describes the many ways that the seductions of power can drive apart even the most committed couples. At every step along her journey, Jenny Sanford has made choices: She gave up her career, moved far from her home state of Illinois, even changed her religious practices. Every choice was a glad concession to harmonious married life and, in some cases, to the support of her husband’s political aspirations. But the one thing she never gave up was her sense of self, her inner moral compass. Her remarkable poise and decency make her a role model for men and women alike. Her story will empower anyone who has fought to maintain independence and integrity—within a marriage or elsewhere in life.

*Broken Open* New World Library

A year before Ram Dass's passing, he engaged in an intimate dialogue with his dear friend, Mirabai Bush. *Walking Each Other Home* presents their extraordinary discussion about loving and dying, sharing their stories, favorite practices, and deep wisdom about the most important, final step on our spiritual journey through this lifetime.

*Cassandra Speaks* Macmillan

From a bestselling author—“a riveting, fun, and insightful tour of life’s meaning and purpose, essential reading for anyone drawn to the query, ‘How ought we to live?’” (Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence*) Contrary to what we’ve been taught in our reason-obsessed culture, argues Matousek, emotions are the bedrock of ethical life; without them, human beings cannot be empathic, moral, or good. But how do we make the judgment call between self-interest and caring for others? What does being good really mean? Which parts of morality are biological, which ethical? When should instinct be trusted and when does it lead us into trouble? How can we know ourselves to be good amidst the hypocrisy, fears, and sabotaging appetites that pervade our two-sided natures? Drawing on the latest scientific research and interviews with social scientists, spiritual leaders, ex-cons, altruists, and philosophers, Matousek examines morality from all angles in this thoroughly entertaining and helpful guide to crossing one’s own murky moral terrain.

*My Life So Far (with Bonus Content)* Flatiron Books

This national bestseller from celebrated novelist and memoirist Dani Shapiro is an intimate and eloquent companion to living a creative life. Through a blend of memoir, meditation on the artistic process, and advice on craft, Shapiro offers her gift to writers everywhere: a guide of hard-won wisdom and advice for staying the course. In the ten years since the first edition, *Still Writing* has become a mainstay of creative writing classes as well as a lodestar for writers just starting out, and above all, an indispensable almanac for modern writers.

*8 Habits of Love* Harmony

Stories carry the seeds of our humanness. They help us, teach us, heal us, and connect us to what matters. *As Far As the Heart Can See* is an invitation to be in relationship with deep and life-giving material. Many spiritual gurus present dense metaphysical theses with an intellectual approach for "working" a spiritual path; poet and philosopher Mark Nepo reaches people through their hearts,

bringing something fresh and new to the field by stimulating change through reflection of thoughts and feelings. The stories he shares in *As Far As the Heart Can See* come from many places—from Nepo’s personal history to dreams to the myths of our ancestors. Each one is an invitation to awaken an aspect of living in relationship with the sacred. Following each of the forty-five stories are three forms of an invitation to further the conversation: journal questions, table questions, and meditations. The questions, whether reflected upon in a journal or discussed in deeper conversation with friends or family, are meant to lead the seeker down unimagined paths and back into life; the meditations are meant to ground the learning. These stories and parables about universal concepts and themes offer a poet’s sensuality and a philosopher’s sensibility to personalizing the journey of the human experience in the world.

*Still Life with Woodpecker* HarperCollins

Gorgeous, spirited and extravagantly rich, Cora Cash is the closest thing 1890s New York society has to a princess. Her masquerade ball is the prelude to a campaign that will see her mother whisk Cora to Europe, where Mrs Cash wants nothing less than a title for her daughter. In England, impoverished blue-bloods are queueing up for introductions to American heiresses, overlooking the sometimes lowly origins of their fortunes. Cora makes a dazzling impression, but the English aristocracy is a realm fraught with arcane rules and pitfalls, and there are those less than eager to welcome a wealthy outsider...

*Walking Each Other Home* Villard

The author of the New York Times bestseller *Broken Open* returns with a visceral and profound memoir of two sisters who, in the face of a bone marrow transplant—one the donor and one the recipient—begin a quest for acceptance, authenticity, and most of all, love. A mesmerizing and courageous memoir: the story of two sisters uncovering the depth of their love through the life-and-death experience of a bone marrow transplant. Throughout her life, Elizabeth Lesser has sought understanding about what it means to be true to oneself and, at the same time, truly connected to the ones we love. But when her sister Maggie needs a bone marrow transplant to save her life, and Lesser learns that she is the perfect match, she faces a far more immediate and complex question about what it really means to love—honestly, generously, and authentically. Hoping to give Maggie the best chance possible for a successful transplant, the sisters dig deep into the marrow of their relationship to clear a path to unconditional acceptance. They leave the bone marrow transplant up to the doctors, but take on what Lesser calls a "soul marrow transplant," examining their family history, having difficult conversations, examining old assumptions, and offering forgiveness until all that is left is love for each other’s true selves. Their process—before, during, and after the transplant—encourages them to take risks of authenticity in other aspects their lives. But life does not follow the storylines we plan for it. Maggie’s body is ultimately too weak to fight the relentless illness. As she and Lesser prepare for the inevitable, they grow ever closer as their shared blood cells become a symbol of the enduring bond they share. Told with suspense and humor, *Marrow* is joyous and heartbreaking, incandescent and profound. The story reveals how even our most difficult experiences can offer unexpected spiritual growth. Reflecting on the multifaceted nature of love—love of other, love of self, love of the world—*Marrow* is an unflinching and beautiful memoir about getting to the very center of ourselves.

*The Wisdom of Sundays* Grove/Atlantic, Inc.

Building on wisdom from Hindu, Christian, and Kaballah traditions, this comprehensive guide to energy healing reveals the hidden stresses, beliefs, and attitudes that cause illness. *Anatomy of the Spirit* is the boldest presentation of energy medicine to date, written by one of its premier practitioners, internationally acclaimed medical intuitive Caroline Myss, who is amongst the "hottest new voices in the alternative health/spirituality scene" (Publishers Weekly). Based on fifteen years of research into energy medicine, Dr. Myss's work shows how every illness corresponds to a pattern of emotional and psychological stresses, beliefs, and attitudes that have influenced corresponding areas of the human body. *Anatomy of the Spirit* also presents Dr. Myss's breakthrough model of the body's seven centers of spiritual and physical power, in which she synthesizes the ancient wisdom of three spiritual traditions—the Hindu chakras, the Christian sacraments, and the Kabbalah's Tree of Life—to demonstrate the seven stages through which everyone must pass in the search for higher consciousness and spiritual maturity. With this model, Dr. Myss shows how you can develop your own latent powers of intuition as you simultaneously cultivate your personal power and spiritual growth. By teaching you to see your body and spirit in a

new way, *Anatomy of the Spirit* provides you with the tools for spiritual maturity and physical wholeness that will change your life.

*Mother of the Unseen World* Bantam

A spiritual guidebook to living life through love and connection, not fear and isolation, by a respected pastor and a frequent guest on Oprah's Soul Series. Reverend Bacon believes that every person can live a full and creative life if they can learn to move through troubling emotions such as fear, anger, and sadness to find the beloved within themselves. Readers will learn how insecurity can keep us from connecting with others, our loving self, and finding our own peace, joy, and creative power. *8 HABITS OF LOVE* will show, through relatable stories, how to create a full, meaningful life by developing simple habits—stillness, truth, forgiveness, compassion, play, candor, generosity, and community—and by asking such important questions as: How do I know I'm living the life I should be? How do I forgive those who have hurt me? How do I talk candidly with difficult people? How do I best help others when they need it? And How do I let go of the past and move forward? Having dedicated his life to helping others, Ed Bacon has seen firsthand that when we open our hearts to love's abundance we are able to transform our lives for the better and make the world a more just and peaceful place. Through illuminating stories and invaluable advice, *8 HABITS OF LOVE* reveals how we can create full and meaningful lives by developing simple yet profound habits of generosity, stillness, truth, candor, play, forgiveness, compassion, and community. When put into practice in our daily lives, these important habits help us make the choice--day after day--to reject fear's hold and embrace, instead, the immense power and grace within all of us.

*The New American Spirituality* Villard

“Robbins’s comic philosophical musings reveal a flamboyant genius.”—People Still Life with Woodpecker is a sort of a love story that takes place inside a pack of Camel cigarettes. It reveals the purpose of the moon, explains the difference between criminals and outlaws, examines the conflict between social activism and romantic individualism, and paints a portrait of contemporary society that includes powerful Arabs, exiled royalty, and pregnant cheerleaders. It also deals with the problem of redheads.

*Faith* Everest Media LLC

*God of Love* is Mirabai Starr’s passionate and personal exploration of the interconnected wisdom of the three Abrahamic faiths. She shares an overview of essential teachings, stories of saints and spiritual masters, prophetic calls for peace and justice, and for the first time in print, deeply engaging narratives from her own spiritual experiences. She guides readers to recognize the teachings and practices that unify rather than divide the three religions, and sheds light on the interspiritual perspective, which celebrates the Divine in all paths. It is Mirabai’s hope that this book will serve as a reminder that a dedication to lovingkindness is the highest expression of faith for all three religions. **EARLY REVIEWS FOR God of Love** “Mirabai Starr takes us out dancing with the One. God of Love is a confluence of the currents of Judaism, Islam and Christianity all emptying into the great ocean of Love.” —Ram Dass, Author *Be Here Now* “In a time of division between people, this book — which is a masterful blend of research, storytelling, poetry, and memoir — is like a sacred magnet, pulling on the spiritual heart of all seekers.” —Elizabeth Lesser, Co-founder, Omega Institute; Author, *Broken Open: How Difficult Times Can Help Us Grow* “Mirabai Starr writes of the divine from a luminous gene inherited by only a few. We hear The True Song in each word she attributes to the holy. It is more than just her song; it is the Melody of the Spheres translated by an astute musician. We are always touched by the genuine in her call to the reader to love and love well, to see with the sacred eye of beauty.” -Ondrea & Stephen Levine, Authors *Embracing the Beloved* "Mirabai's book has brought me great consolation." -Daniel Berrigan, S. J. activist-priest; Author, *No Gods but One* “This book brilliantly reminds us that in the heart of the Abrahamic traditions there burns a singular divine flame.” -Rev. Robert V. Thompson, Author *A Voluptuous God* “A wonderful and ‘perfect’ book. Highly recommended.” -Rabbi David A. Cooper, Author *God Is a Verb* “[God of Love] will expand your vision and inspire your search; I recommend it with great joy.” -Andrew Harvey, Author *The Hope: A Guide to Sacred Activism* “At home in the three great Abrahamic traditions, Mirabai Starr takes us on a deeply personal journey 'Toward the One,' exploring aspects of the 'God of Love' as seen through the eyes of Jewish, Christian and Muslim mystics. This is a book which will delight the seeker of sacred connections between these traditions and those who look forward to a day when Jerusalem, the city shared by all these faiths, will be a house of prayer for all people.” -Reb Netanel Miles-Yepe, Co-Author *A Heart Afire: Stories and Teachings of the Early Hasidic Masters*